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ABSTRACT

Focusing on changing roles of American women in response to social, technological, and historical influences since 1607, the document describes women's participation in home life, sports, professions, business, the labor movement, social reform, and the fight for legal rights. The document comprises six chronologically organized booklets and a teaching guide. The six booklets (1) examine the physically demanding activities of colonial women (1607-1830); (2) consider the beginnings of the women's movement (1830-60); (3) investigate divisions between those women who favored social reform and those who operated predominately in domestic and social spheres (1860-90); (4) trace the drive for women's suffrage and relate attempts by women to understand their roles in a rapidly changing society (1890-1920); (5) contrast the pre-World War I lull in the women's movement with women's new sense of social responsibility as they took over roles vacated by men who had been called away to war (1920-60); and (6) illustrate increasing political dissent and the emergence of a new feminism (1960s and 70s). Each booklet provides an overview of the chronological period and describes women's roles in various spheres of activity. The teachers guide describes major themes of each booklet (such as disillusionment, discrimination, feminism); offers a rationale for the booklets' historical perspective; and suggests discussion questions, library research topics, and vocabulary terms. Twelve 10" by 13" portraits of women who played important roles in American history and a chronological chart of all major facts in the booklet are available from the publisher. (Author/DE)

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AMERICAN WOMEN; 1607 TO THE PRESENT

by Polly Zane and John Zane

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

BOOKLET 1: 1607-1830

From Colony to Nationhood, Women's Roles Rise and Fall

SO 010859

The Proof Press
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The portraits on the cover show Pocahontas (1595-1617), at top, and Abigail Adams (1744-1818), below. These pencil studies are by John Zane.

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Introduction

Throughout the long period that stretched from the early days of the first English colonies on through the time of the American Revolution, women shared with men in the hard struggle to establish European society in the New World's wilderness.

The following pages describe the tough but rewarding activities of colonial women and how these activities dwindled after the American Revolution.

The first permanent English settlement in America, Jamestown, was established in 1607, and provides a convenient starting place for the story of the American woman and her continually changing role in society. In this booklet, only brief mention is made of the relatively unchanging role of Indian women during their centuries long occupation of the Americas prior to European contact.

This booklet covers a time span of a little over two hundred years. During this period, an entire new world develops—the American colonies grow and prosper, the American Revolution is fought and somehow won, and the New Republic is created and begins vast economic and territorial expansion.

During those 225 years, women's activities varied greatly, but their aspirations seldom included a desire for change. That was to come in the decades following 1830.

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Legal and Social Equality

It is hard to imagine day to day life in the American colonies; there were only a few of those labor-saving devices that today dramatically shorten the time consumed by household tasks. The providing of food, clothing, shelter, and safety demanded the full attention of both men and women, and often children as well. Most Americans led agricultural lives and the self-sufficient farmer and his family depended on their own abilities in lumbering, tanning, and such home industry as simple blacksmithing, weaving and the making of clothing, soap and candle making, and many more equally practical skills.

Physical stamina was essential to survival. Life itself was often short, especially for women who had no choice but to endure multiple childbirths as interruptions to long periods of hard physical labor.

Men tended to live longer than women and generally remarried if their wives died. This seemingly callous routine was necessary in that a household deteriorated rapidly when there was no woman to run it. Altogether, in this period of history, only the hardiest and most determined of both sexes survived.

Most colonial Americans were English; British tradition and law governed American society. The underlying assumption of that society was that women were inferior and subordinate to men. The laws reflected this assumption and produced a system under which women had few rights and many restrictions.

As long as she was single, a woman was considered to be a legal person and could own property. These rights, however, disappeared on her wedding day.

When she was married, a woman was obliged to pledge obedience to her husband, and she was no longer allowed to control or to hold title to property or other wealth.

Women could not legally sign wills or witness papers, nor could they enter professions or establish businesses; they did not have access to higher education. It is ironic that, even with these handicaps, a woman might be forced to support her children if her husband chose to desert them.

As the years passed, however, changes were gradually made. A few laws began to reflect a man's responsibility to his family. In 1660 a Connecticut law required a man to live with his family. At the same time, Massachusetts law determined that a man had a responsibility to support his own children, even those born out of wedlock. In the 1660's, women occasionally began to sit on juries and in this indirect way had some small effect on decisions concerning their own lives.

Gradually, as time went by, laws which excluded women from entering businesses or the professions, eased or were ignored (because of the critical labor shortage), so that the colonial period in actual fact had a very liberating effect on women's lives. This was not to be permanent, however.

Domesticity and Education

Women's primary occupation remained that of raising large families—from 5 to 15 children. Often the care of the elderly was an additional burden. Child care centers and nursing homes were things of the future.

Children's schooling most often took place in the home and was primarily the responsibility of the mother. Among wealthier families a tutor or governess might be hired.

After 1650 some local communities were required to open public schools at the elementary level. Girls might attend elementary school but only boys were admitted to the grammar schools which taught Latin and other subjects as preparation for college.

Most early settlers lived on isolated farms or in small villages and towns. By the 1750's, with a national population of about 1½ million, 97% of the people still lived on farms or in small towns. In North America, there were only five cities with populations of more than 7,000, and the largest of these, Philadelphia, had grown to only 23,700 inhabitants by 1760. There was little social activity after the hard day's labors were over. In addition to the raising of numerous children, women provided all the necessary ingredients for living, once men had done the planting and harvesting.

Of all the jobs performed by women, one of the most important was the task of making clothing. This home craft required lots of time and a wide variety of skills. Women started with raw cotton or wool which they carded and then spun into yarn or thread; this they wove into cloth, which they then tailored into clothes for each member of the family. Thus the term "homespun" clothing came into being.

The wife cleaned, pickled, preserved, and cooked the grains, meats, and vegetables. She made wax candles, soap, and home medicines. She also churned the household butter, made simple cheese, and (if maple trees were available) helped make syrup and sugar. In these very early days, women manufactured most of the things that were necessary to life.

Sometimes there were surplus goods. These were sold from the home and after a time this practice developed into full blown home industries.

Work Outside the Home

Most importantly for colonial women, their responsibilities did not end with domestic chores. During this period and into the early days of the New Republic, there was a severe labor shortage. Few people braved the rugged life of the new country. The small population, combined with the economic poverty of the colonies, made it generally beneficial and frequently necessary for women to extend home activities to business affairs outside the home—trades, professions, and even large managerial posts, in spite of the laws forbidding them to do so.

In the 1650's Margaret Brent, with her sister, owned and managed over 1000 acres in Maryland. Eliza Lucas Pinckney, at a slightly later time (1735) experimented with, raised, and exported large crops of indigo on her father's plantations, greatly increasing the economy of the Carolinas.

Many retail trades attracted women: millinery, dry goods, grocery shops, print shops, newpapers, dyers, menders, grocers, upholsterers, and undertakers. Women also ran taverns, coffee houses, inns, and boarding houses. (The coffee house trade began in Boston in 1670 when women were first licensed to sell coffee and chocolate.) They learned these trades through apprenticeships or from their husbands and other relatives.

Some women entered the field of medicine as practicing doctors, midwives, and nurses—caring for the sick and wounded, and dispensing drugs and herbs for healing. As there were no medical schools and only a few hospitals, training was through books and apprenticeship; colonial doctors did not have to be licensed in order to practice medicine.

Another professional field entered by women, even though they were not legally allowed to practice, was law. There were female attorneys-in-fact, acting on behalf of themselves as well as others.

Literary careers were both attractive and rewarding for women. The works of America's first real poetess, New England's Anne Bradstreet, were initially published in England, although by 1678 her poems were also appearing in this country. Among the most popular nursery rhymes ever composed are "Mother Goose's Melodies," written in 1715 by Elizabeth Vergoose, of Boston. Phyllis Wheatley, a negro slave, became famous for her verses both here and in England and provided early proof that black people could benefit from an education. Other literary efforts included the writing of plays, historical works, and commentaries. The first American novel was written by Sarah Wentworth in 1781.

Social Reform

The Puritan church in the Masachusetts Bay Colony often brought suffering, violence, and sometimes death to those who dared to defy its rigid orthodoxy. Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643), not only defied church doctrine, she rejected the subordinate position of women within its ranks. Preaching before small groups of women (and later men), she discussed, interpreted, and taught the scripture. For this she ultimately was brought to trial and banished from the colony (1638). Her only defender, Mary Dyer, met a sterner fate. She repeatedly defied Massachusetts' authority in order to follow her Quaker faith until finally, in 1660, she was hanged to death. Most churches felt women should be seen but never heard. An exception was the Quaker Church where both men and women spoke at "Friends' " meetings. Many of the future leaders of the women's rights movement were members of the Quaker Church.

As for other social reform, it was centered primarily in the church and church-related activities, both before and immediately after the American Revolution. The first outcry against the use of alcohol occurred at this time, but opposition was well within the confines of the church. Eventually temperance reform (abstinence from all liquor) became an absorbing interest for millions of women.

Indian Women

Indians had inhabited this continent for many centuries before the whites arrived, but Indian women generally did not hold the same relative social position as that held by white colonial women.

Indian societies varied widely, however, and no single statement fits them all. In some Indian cultures, such as the Iroquois, women were the dominant members of the extended family (two or more generations of related families). Leadership resided in the oldest matrons, who directed domestic and farm activities, settled disputes, and appointed members to the tribal council. But more often, the life of an Indian woman was one of hard labor, struggle, danger and, eventually, retreat to a reservation.

There are no early records of attempts by Indian women to reform their tribal structures and their positions within them; they seemed content with the way they were treated and with the respect and responsibility given them.

Their duties included: gathering, preparing, and preserving food; tanning hides, making and breaking up camp; and carrying heavy loads during long migrations. Men's roles were more clearly defined than in the white culture, at least in the nomadic and warring tribes. Men fought and hunted; women did most of the rest of the work. Among tribes whose subsistence depended on agriculture, the division of labor by sex more closely resembled that of the white settlers.

A few Indian women became legendary heroines. Around the year 1608, Pocahontas, daughter of the Indian chief Powhatan, is thought to have saved Captain John Smith's life by interceding in the face of her father's determination to kill him. Some 200 years later, Sacajawea, a Shoshone, served as interpreter and guide for the Lewis & Clark expedition, her knowledge of the terrain and kinship with the Indians undoubtedly saving many lives as she led the exploring party through the wilderness. Both women did much to keep peace between the Indian and white people.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION (1775-1783)

With the onset of the American Revolution, those who supported the rebel cause instantly rallied to the war effort. The exciting spirit of rebellion was in the air, and women supported men in all respects—they backed them in political organizations, formed their own groups (such as the "Daughters of Liberty"), boycotted British goods, threatened to dump tea, and even took over men's jobs when need arose. They cared for the wounded, made clothing, set up relief organizations, and raised money to buy hospital and other supplies. A few hardy women, like Molly Pitcher, even joined men in the line of battle —others acted as spies and carried out daring feats in enemy-held territory.

Mercy Otis Warren (1728-1814), sister of James Otis and a brilliant woman, broke through the political barriers that separated women from men, and became well acquainted with revolutionary figures through her brother. She used her literary ability to help the rebels by writing political dramas to stir up feelings for the revolutionary cause. In 1805 she finished the writing of a 3-volume history of the American Revolution.

By the close of the American Revolution, women were participating in most of the activities of their dynamic young country. This broadening sphere of activity was to diminish, however, during the next fifty years.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Within a few decades after the Revolution, women's position within American society had become quite different from that held by women in colonial times and during the war. But this change in status simply matched the way the country itself was changing rapidly, both in size and in wealth.

In the peace agreement with England, the United States received all the land from the Atlantic to the Mississippi and from Canada south to Florida. By 1819 eight new states had been added to the Union, and Florida had been purchased. The nation had already acquired a huge land area west of the Mississippi through the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

The government and private enterprise set about connecting the far flung parts of the growing empire—in 1817, New York began digging the Erie Canal connecting the eastern seaboard with the Great Lakes, and Pennsylvania pushed the expansion of its network of turnpikes (these roads were early versions of today's freeways) and canals. New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia began similar programs. In the West, the Oregon and Santa Fe trails were developed. Robert Fulton had invented the steamboat in 1807, and in the 1800's this efficient way of shipping became commonplace.

As the transportation network grew, manufacturing and new industries were growing in New England and the Middle Atlantic States. The population seemed on the move—immigrants began arriving from Europe at the same time that many Americans were pushing westward into the newly acquired lands. And while this westward migration was accelerating, so was a trend toward eastern urbanization (in 1754, 2% of the people lived in cities, in 1819, 7%). This metropolitan growth was the result partly of new arrivals from Europe settling in the ports where they landed and partly a drift of farm families to the cities.

During this period, the country's population had shot up from 1⅓ million to 10⅓ million. Some of this growth was due to the increasing number of black people who were brought to this country, a practice that had begun in 1619. In the beginning, black people were treated as indentured servants, but by 1660 their status had diminished to that of slaves. Their numbers increased so rapidly that by 1750 blacks made up 20% of the population. By 1790 there were 700,000 black slaves. In 1807, Congress passed a law banning the slave trade, but the black population continued to grow.

Industry and the Working Class Woman

As the middle class city woman found her leisure time growing, life in rural America continued much as it always had. Women pitched in to do all kinds of work on the farm and in the villages. In urban areas, as industrialization increased, some of the poorer farm girls were lured to the cities to escape rural boredom and relative poverty. Initially, they worked in the growing textile mills of the large New England towns, later, in other types of factories. Soon, women and children became the predominant working force in these factories.

The textile mills were made possible as a result of a series of inventions in which the work of hundreds of people was equalled by a few machines. The cotton gin, invented by Eli Whitney in 1793, separated cotton fiber from the seeds. One of his machines did the work of 50 people, which meant, not a reduction in the number of laborers, but an increase in production. About the same time, Samuel Slater built the first successful water-powered machine for spinning cotton. And lastly, the old hand loom was replaced by a water-powered loom.

In 1830, New England had over a hundred textile factories. As a growing number of women and girls went to work in these factories (or mills as they were sometimes called), long hours and harsh working conditions became more common and brought about the first rumblings of discontent. Mill workers were forced to live in carefully controlled dormitories, a condition which added to the general unrest. A series of strikes occurred: 1824—the mill girls of Pawtucket, Rhode Island; 1828—the cotton mill girls of Dover, New York. This latter strike was provoked when the mill owners announced that workers must pay a fine of 12½ cents for being five minutes late to work. This 12½ cents represented a third of a day's pay. For the wage-earning woman, work was poorly paid and hard, whether she was employed as a factory hand, milliner, laundress, domestic, teacher, or farmhand.

Women's Rights

In the first 200 years of this country's existence, women thought little about changing their roles in society. Only occasionally was an isolated voice raised in protest. Women's main concerns were legal and property rights as well as the right to an equal education.

Abigail Adams, in 1777, wrote to her husband, John Adams (the future president of the country) asking him to remind the Continental Congress that:

> . . . in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined

> to foment a rebellion . . . and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.

Both Abigail Adams and Mercy Otis Warren also pressured Washington and Jefferson to include women's emancipation in the Constitution.

On education, Abigail Adams again spoke out:

> If you complain of education in sons, what shall I say in regard to daughters, who get none at all? . . . If we mean to have heroes, statesmen, and philosophers we should have learned women.

Mercy Otis Warren was equally outspoken on this subject. She felt that if women and men had equal intellects they should have equal educations.

Some progress in this direction had been made in the 1700's and early 1800's when secondary schools were established. These were called academies and were usually private and very expensive. Most were for boys, but some admitted girls and still others were for girls only. Girls, however, were not taught the same subjects that boys were. Only boys received college preparatory courses.

It was not until later that the first major changes in American education occurred. One of the pioneers in effecting change was Emma Hart Willard (1787-1870), who, having been denied a teaching credential herself, was determined to improve educational opportunities for other women. Her solution to the problem was to set about founding what, if she were successful, would be the nation's first high school for girls. After a long struggle to secure public funds, Emma Willard won through and was able to establish the Troy Female Seminary. The doors were triumphantly opened in 1821.

During this same period, another champion of women's education was heard from. Frances Wright (1795-1852), a brilliant and eccentric Scotswoman, toured the United States in the 1820's and 30's speaking out for educational and legal rights for women. Public education, she felt, should be available to everyone, including working men and women.

On political rights, Margaret Brent, in 1647, a large landowner and attorney for her estates, demanded two votes in the Maryland Assembly—one as lord of the manor and the other as acting attorney. She was refused on both counts but her voice had been heard, and her words would echo for future generations. An even more important development, though very short-lived, was the brief period at the close of the 18th century when New Jersey allowed women to vote.

Except in unusual cases such as Margaret Brent's, women's political role was unobtrusive and their influence mostly behind the scenes. Abigail Adams and Dolley Madison, the capital's brilliant hostess during her husband's presidency, both exerted influence through their husbands.

Summary

Much had happened to this country since the first colonists arrived in 1607. A restless freedom-loving group of people broke ties with England and formed a new nation.

As the 1820's drew to a close this new nation was beginning to grow—expanding westward at a rapid pace; roads, canals, and the first railroads had appeared. The population was increasing, industries were growing, and wage-earning women for the first time were working outside the home in the factories of the Northeast.

Middle class women were finding their roles more narrowly confined. The next 30 years would see all of these trends continuing but at a more rapid pace.

AMERICAN WOMEN; 1607 TO THE PRESENT

by Polly Zane and John Zane

BOOKLET 2: 1830-1860

Women's Movement Born; Nation Follows Road to Civil War

The Proof Press
Berkeley, California

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On the cover, the top portrait shows Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), on the left, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902); the lower portrait is of Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910). These pencil studies are by John Zane.

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Introduction

The new republic, so recently conceived and so promising in its growth, was soon marred by acrimonious strife and tension leading directly to the Civil War. The great issue of the day was slavery, and women joined with men in the fight to abolish it.

From this effort, women came to realize their own inequality and their impoverished position in society. Thus, from abolition reform, the women's movement was born. For the first time women got together to discuss their place in society and to determine what, if anything, they wanted to do about it.

The women's movement began formally at the Seneca Falls (N.Y.) Convention in 1848. From that time on, women's lives would be influenced not only by outside events—as had been the case historically—but they would also be affected by the conscious efforts of women themselves.

National Trends in the mid 19th Century

To better understand the women's movement and its beginnings in the 1840's, it is helpful to know the setting in which the development occurred.

As it had been doing since it was founded, the United States continued to grow rapidly. The economy boomed; its wealth increased. Two factors brought about this national success.

The first was a revolution in transportation. In less than 50 years a network of surfaced roads had been built across the country; a canal system providing for steam navigation on inland waterways had been established; and construction had begun on the railroad lines (turnpikes developed between 1800-1825, canals between 1815-1840, and railroads between 1840-70).

The second and equally important factor in the nation's growth was the rapid increase in population; it climbed from five to thirty million, a six-fold jump between 1800 and 1860. Increased population supplied both customers and laborers.

Tools, hardware, and machinery were made primarily from iron after 1830. Power was derived from steam and the burning of coal. Large scale manufacturing was replacing farming in the economy, especially in New England and the middle Atlantic states. Even farming came under the influence of mechanization through such inventions as McCormack's reaper.

Immigration

Between 1830 and 1860 large numbers of immigrants continued to pour into this country. The first wave of immigrants, called by historians "The Old Immigration," was mostly from Northern Europe—Germany, Scandinavia, England, and Ireland. By 1860 the population of this country was approximately 30,000,000—up almost 16 million from 1830.

Urban growth and development continued unabated. By 1860 approximately 20% of the population lived in cities, mostly due to the new immigrants and an influx of farming people seeking work.

Technological Advancements

A few new household improvements continued to decrease the workload of the housewife. By the 1850's the first large scale marketing of standardized cooking stoves occurred. Coal-burning ranges with removable lids were available. Natural ice from commercial "ice houses" could be had at about the same time. Also by the 1850's, there were sewing machines which one operated by hand. Still other labor-saving household devices were invented during this period but were not produced and on the market until a later time: mason jars, safety pins, etc.

In the world of commerce, two developments increased the pace of business—faster printing presses made it possible to get information more speedily to huge numbers of people, and the invention of the telegraph (by Samuel Morse in 1837) enabled instantaneous transmission of information across great distances. By the 1850's, businessmen were using these faster communication methods to speed operations all across the country.

The Middle-Class Woman

The net impact of these changes on middle-class women was far-reaching.

As the economy expanded, the wealth of the country increased, and, more and more people became affluent. Many women were now able to hire servants to do their work for them. With this greater abundance of leisure time there was a corresponding increase in the kinds of activities available to women and they began to look for occupations outside their homes.

During the 1830's these leisure-class women were tentatively probing many new fields. Some were writing, others were trying to get into the professions, and still others were fighting for a better education. Many joined church-related groups. But the big swing during the 1850's and 60's was toward the rapidly growing number of abolition and temperance societies.

Writing

Some women found it necessary to earn their own living and turned to writing for an income. For the bright young woman, writing emerged as a highly lucrative profession. Many became proficient editors, journalists, and authors of successful novels, poetry, and the like.

Ladies' magazines, published mostly by women, came into being about this time and flourished with astounding success. By the mid 1840's many of these periodicals had large mass circulations. Women believed these magazines would teach them how best to raise a family, run a house, dress stylishly, and entertain. The magazines also preached high moral standards. The women who wrote for these periodicals made exceptionally good livings. One such woman was Sarah Josepha Hale—not only the author of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," but for 40 years (1837-77) editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, the most popular magazine of the time.

Many women wrote books in support of various causes; others wrote romantic fiction or poetry. All were enthusiastic. Among the more successful were: Lydia Sigourney, whose sweet sentimental poetry was read by thousands; Jane Swisshelm, a frontier journalist, whose presses were destroyed by a gang of angry men who resented her outspoken stand on controversial matters.

Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880) was not only a writer of many novels but one of the first women interested in the rights of women and blacks. In 1832 she wrote a three-volume history of notable American women. Later she became a radical abolitionist and wrote *An Appeal for That Class of Americans Called Africans.* It was a brave act; the public turned against her because of it and she lost her livelihood as a writer.

Probably the most famous writer of this time was Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), a woman drawn to many of the reform movements of the period, but who found it necessary to write for a livelihood. In 1851 she wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* a powerful novel describing the evils of slavery. It was an instant success and sold over 300,000 copies in the first year of publication.

Business and the Professions

In colonial times, women had worked in a variety of crafts, trades, and cottage industries; now, in the days of the new republic, these avenues were closing to them. With increased industrialization, most of the cottage industries gave way to factories. As men moved their businesses out of the home and into factories, women were left behind. Middle-class women now found their roles limited to that of housewife and mother, their jobs the maintenance of culture and tradition, and their objective one of being a social asset to their husbands. The world of middle-class women was shrinking as the nation expanded.

Many barriers faced women if they became interested in entering business or the professions. Both fields were developing formal requirements and forms of licensing based on education. The hitch for women was that they were excluded from the schools that provided the necessary professional training. Law, medicine, and the ministry, together with numerous trades and businesses were fields now beyond women's reach.

However, a handful of bright and determined women was able to hurdle even these tough barriers. Elizabeth Blackwell (1821-1910), fighting against fierce opposition, became the first American woman to obtain a medical degree. She was admitted to Geneva College, NY, the only school that would accept her. Ostracized, at first, by her fellow students and teachers, she later won their admiration and respect. After earning her degree in 1849, she found it almost impossible to set up a practice. Barred from practicing in city dispensaries, she started her own one-room dispensary in 1853. This she expanded to become the New York Infirmary for Women and Children in 1857. The culmination of her work, however, was her expansion of the infirmary in 1868 to include a medical college—a woman's college for the training of doctors. The standards were equal to men's, and clinical training (which she had found so hard to obtain) was now assured to the women medical students.

Other women who broke into the professions were: Margaret Fuller, an eminent intellectual and feminist (mentioned in Booklet 1) who earned her way as lecturer and critic; Harriet Hosmer, a pioneer in the women's art world where her huge sculpture pieces brought her fame; Maria Mitchell, noted astronomer, whose discovery of a comet in 1847 brought her reknown and election to the

American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the first woman to receive this honor.

The first woman to be ordained a minister to an established church was Antoinette Brown Blackwell (1825-1921), sister-in-law of Elizabeth Blackwell. Ignoring the objections of her parents and the faculty, she obtained her training at Oberlin College. In spite of Oberlin's refusal to give her a degree, she was invited to become the minister of the First Congregational Church of New York.

The women mentioned above were exceptions, however, and were important mostly in showing that fierce determination could break down some of the barriers that kept women out of the professions just before the Civil War.

Education

In spite of the few gains that had been made in the 1820's, women continued to resent the inadequacy and inequality of their education. They contended that a person's sphere of activity should not be determined by one's sex but should instead be shaped by desire, training, and education. If the domestic sphere was too limited, and it was for many women, then women should be educated for other work on an equal basis with men. Following in the footsteps of Emma Willard and Frances Wright, who in the 1820's had spoken out for women's education, came more outspoken critics of the educational system: the Grimké sisters of South Carolina (mentioned elsewhere in these booklets), Mary Lyon, Catharine Beecher, and the great educator, Horace Mann.

In the 1830's, these educators demanded a publicly supported school system, but it was many years before their effort bore fruit. By the 1850's elementary public school systems were fairly well established in America, and standardized texts (the McGuffy Readers, for example) were beginning to be used throughout the country. Public secondary schools were common by the 1870's.

Mary Lyon (1797-1849) was one of the greatest educators of her time. She opened the first college for women in the 1830's. At this time a college education for women was unheard of—in fact intellectual activity was considered by some to be dangerous to a woman's brain. It took Mary Lyon two years to raise the money necessary for her college but the doors finally opened at Mt. Holyoke in 1837. Oberlin College, founded in 1833, was a coeducational college and had always admitted women, but it was the only one to do so.

During the last half of the 19th century, however, college education did begin to open up for women: Antioch in 1852; the University of Iowa in 1858; Vassar in 1865, and many more after that.

Another great educator of this period was Catharine Beecher (1800-1878). Her fields were teacher training and domestic science. As with most of the women mentioned in this study, she had a formidable mind matched by an equally formidable determination. Her insistence that women teachers be trained academically on a par with men resulted in her opening of the Hartford Female Seminary at Boston in 1823. Mastering two or three subjects, she felt, was infinitely superior to becoming merely acquainted with thirty or so. Her standards were high and her graduates became educational leaders throughout the west.

Later, Catharine Beecher, who fundamentally felt that a woman's place was in the home, became interested in domestic science. In the 1840's she wrote some of the first home economics books—one of them with her famous sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe—laying the foundation for the home economics studies of today.

Prudence Crandall should also be mentioned for her attempt, even though it was unsuccessful, to conduct a boarding school for negro girls in Connecticut, in 1833. She was determined to relieve the double burden of negro girls; they had the disadvantage not only of being girls, but also that of being black. The townspeople, however, fought Prudence Crandall and her school in every conceivable way. First, funds were withdrawn; then food;

then legal action was brought against her, and finally her school was physically demolished. It was then, brave and determined though she was, that she had to give up.

Working Class Women

Although working conditions in the New England factories had not been ideal for the working-class woman in the first decades of the 19th century, still they had not been intolerable. With the coming of Irish and other immigrants, however, things deteriorated rapidly. In the 1840's and 50's large numbers of immigrant laborers, unskilled and desperate for work, poured into the eastern seaboard towns and the labor market, causing immense competition for jobs. Many country girls were forced out of the factories and had no choice but to return to their farms. Wages fell and working hours increased. A 14-hour workday with a half hour lunch was not uncommon. People worked six days a week. Strikes similar to those in the 1820's continued, this time centering in Lowell, Massachusetts. Sarah Bagley, angry at a 15% cut in wages and a 14-hour day, led women in a strike against the cotton mills in 1845. She had organized the women in a union, the Lowell Female Reform Association, the first women's trade union in the country. This union, like others formed during this period, was not very effective, however, as women needed work too badly to stay off the job. There were always some who were out of work and willing to accept the long hours and low wages. One out of four factory workers was a woman. Many years passed before the sweatshop labor conditions were alleviated. In the meantime women and children were exploited to the fullest. It was not until 1852 that the first state labor law was passed (in Ohio). The law granted women a 10-hour work day.

Reforms

As working class women struggled in the factories, prosperous middle-class women strove to break out of the narrow lives prescribed for them by society. The first demand, as we have seen, was for increased education, not as an end in itself, but as a way of entering the business and professional world. This, however, was not their only interest.

It was an auspicious time for women's demands. Reform movements had sprung up everywhere, grappling with the compelling forces of the day—growing urban population, immigration, slavery—each with its accompanying social ill. Prison and health reforms, world peace, capital punishment, temperance, and the abolition of slavery all were concerns of the reform era. Women poured their hearts and minds into these causes, exerting immense energy and often tackling two or more reforms at once.

Temperance

The question of excessive drinking concerned many women. Alcoholic husbands were a very real problem for thousands of families. There was no recourse for women whose husbands drank heavily and became abusive or who squandered family fortunes. After the revolution, drinking increased and, with it, the number of women who joined temperance societies. During the first decades of the 19th century, the battle for temperance was fought on a local basis and most societies were church oriented. The movement was to grow stronger as time went on.

Even in earlier stages, however, as women attempted to join men in working for temperance, they were faced with discrimination, and thwarted by male usurpation of important positions. Women were relegated to clerical and other secondary tasks. This was the sort of treatment they were to receive in all their attempts to work in the reform movements of this period.

Prison and Health Reform

The battle for prison and health reform was fought almost single-handedly by one frail woman, Dorothea Dix (1802-1889). Incensed at the conditions existing in the New

England jails where the mentally ill and criminals were housed in the same prisons, she set out to present these facts to the Massachusetts legislature and eventually to Congress. Her goal was to change these conditions through law.

After visiting hundreds of penal institutions in several states, she reported: "I come as the advocate of helpless, forgotten, insane, and idiotic men and women; chained, naked, beaten with rods and lashed into obedience." Many reforms were later adopted because of her efforts.

Dress Reform

Hard as it is to believe today, there was a period when women's clothing weighed ten to fifteen pounds and consisted of corsets, stays, petticoats by the dozens, and skirts long enough to skim the ground at all times. Needless to say, women found such styles uncomfortable and restricting. Finally there was a revolt led by Amelia Bloomer, editor of a newspaper called *The Lily*. She publicized the "Bloomer Costume," a style that consisted of pantaloons and a loosely fitting tunic sometimes tied at the waist. Only a few other women had the courage to wear the costume—Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were two of them. The public response to "bloomers" was astounding.

The New York Herald reported:

> The assemblage of rampant women which convened at the Tabernacle yesterday was an interesting phase in the comic history of the nineteenth century.
>
> We saw, in broad daylight, in a public hall in the city of New York, a gathering of unsexed women—unsexed in mind all of them, and many in habiliments—publicly propounding the doctrine that they should be allowed to step out of their appropriate sphere, and mingle in the busy walks of everyday life—

After four years of wearing the Bloomer Costume, the ridicule and condemnation heaped on the wearers was more than they could bear and in 1854 they returned to conventional dress.

Property Control

Ernestine Rose, a Rabbi's daughter from Poland, and one of the leading feminist orators of the day, put great pressure on the New York legislature to give married women the right to own property. Mississippi, in 1834, and Maine, in 1844, had already passed such laws. She was finally successful in 1848. As time went on, other states followed suit.

Abolition of Slavery

Those people concerned with anti-slavery and the "black" question were obsessed with the issue and in a short time many anti-slavery societies were formed. Some groups were male, some female; some black, some white; many had memberships of both sexes and colors. As the Civil War approached, abolition (a movement to abolish slavery) replaced even temperance as the major concern of most Americans. The black slave population had grown from 2 million in 1830 to 4 million in 1860.

Forceful, eloquent, and articulate women took up the cause of abolition—Lucretia Mott, Abbey Kelley, Maria Chapman, Lydia Maria Child, the Grimké sisters, and, later, Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony. They lectured at every opportunity, wrote articles for the papers, circulated petitions, and helped black people in every way, including assistance to fugitives escaping from the South.

Black women were also in the forefront of the anti-slavery movement. Harriet Tubman, a fugitive slave herself, over a period of time led 300 slaves out of the South through the underground railroad. Another former slave and also a forceful person was the tall gaunt Sojourner Truth. She was a powerful speaker against slavery and for women's rights. She worked tirelessly, giving speeches across the country. She attracted huge crowds wherever she talked.

During this period, black women and middle-class white women found close ties and worked to help each other in a drive for the abolition of slavery and for the rights of women. Both felt sympathy for the black woman slave, whose lot was the most unbearable of all social groups of that era.

The female slave (and the male, as well) had a very effective champion in Harriet Beecher Stowe, the most famous of the anti-slavery writers. Her book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* movingly described the evils of slavery to millions of people.

The anti-slavery, pro-feminist activities of these women provoked outrage and criticism. They had stepped beyond the conventional limits set by society. The place for women was in the home, not on a public lecture platform. One of the first to speak out was Lucretia Mott at the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society in Philadelphia in 1832. The astonishment caused by this precedent-shattering appearance caused many newspapers to comment in wonderment.

Probably the most well-known of the early women abolitionists were the Grimké sisters from South Carolina. They moved to Philadelphia where they began a tough campaign in defense of the black slave, writing searing articles to the newspapers and journals. Even more dramatically, they toured the big northern cities, speaking publicly at all opportunities.

This intense and bold activity on their part was highly unusual in the early nineteenth century and provoked a widespread storm of criticism, disapproval, and endless ridicule from many people. Groups of men from the New England Church wrote heatedly, that if a woman "assumed the place and tone of a man as a public reformer" she would "fall in shame and dishonor into the dust."

The question had at last been raised: "What is woman's proper sphere of activity?"

Sarah Grimké answered the question:

> But I ask no favors for my sex. I surrender not our claim to equality. All I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet from off our necks, and

> permit us to stand upright on that ground which God designed us to occupy.

Opposition to women's public appearances was unrelenting. Leading male abolitionists refused to allow women to speak before or to hold significant positions in their organizations. The first angry exchanges occurred amongst the New England abolitionists. Clergymen denounced women's participation in the New England Anti-Slavery Society. This criticism eventually caused a schism and women reacted by forming their own societies. One of the first of these was founded in 1837 and bore the forthright name: National Female Anti-Slavery Society.

And so, while trying to help the black people, women came to realize that they themselves were being similarly treated—as unequal members of society. They protested "If all men are created equal," as the Constitution said, "why not all women?"

Women's Rights

The launching of the women's rights movement, like the launching of a two-stage rocket, gained its momentum from the fight for a different set of reforms—the fight for temperance and against slavery. In those battles, women met stubborn resistance to their speaking publicly and were denied responsible administrative positions in the societies they were working for. Such treatment forced women to recognize just how few rights they themselves had. Once they had faced the impoverishment of their position, however, women took up their own cause and the women's rights movement was born. (See Seneca Falls Convention, below.)

The country had been hearing from individual women about their rights for quite a while. Frances Wright and her plea for equal education for women had startled many in her lecture tours across the nation. The Grimké sisters, of course, had spoken out for women's rights along with abolition. Sojourner Truth had followed in the same path. In 1845 another woman was heard from. Margaret Fuller—brilliant critic, reporter, and conversationalist

—laid the groundwork for feminism in America. Her book, *Woman In The 19th Century,* was published in 1845 and declared that women were not merely equal to men, they were superior!

The significant spark, the one that would smolder for eight years and then flare into the feminist movement, was struck in 1840. Lucretia Mott had been invited to participate as a delegate to the Anti-Slavery Convention in London, and the young Elizabeth Cady Stanton accompanied her. Upon arriving, they learned that the majority of members had voted against their being seated in the assembly. They were forced to sit silently behind curtains, unseen and unheard.

On that day the two women solemnly resolved to bring about a change. Eight years later, in 1848, their resolve became the spark that burst into brilliant flame—The Seneca Falls Convention, in New York. This significant meeting was called together by Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and three other women to discuss "the social, civil, and religious conditions and rights of women."

The Seneca Falls Convention

The first women's rights convention ever held in America issued a Declaration of Sentiments written in the style of the Declaration of Independence and containing these words:

> We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . .
>
> The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

There followed a long list of Sentiments (and later on, Resolutions) outlining the rights women felt they were entitled to: the right to an equal education; the right to speak in public; the right to earn a livelihood equally with men in the trades, professions, and industry. And for the first time, the right to vote was demanded! In Elizabeth Stanton's words:

". . . It is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to elective franchise."

The consensus of the delegates was that voting, like other human rights, rested on the assumption that men and women had identical "capabilities and responsibilities." Therefore there should be no sharp division between the spheres of activity for either sex.

Thus began the women's rights movement in the United States.

The reaction to these public statements was one of shock. The newspapers reported:

> **Women Out of Their Latitude**
>
> We are sorry to see that women in several parts of this state are holding what they call Women's Rights Conventions . . . with the object in view of . . . changing their relative position in society in such a way as to divide with the male sex the labors and responsibilities of active lives . . . Every true hearted female will instantly feel that this is unwomanly . . . this change is impracticable, uncalled for, and unnecessary. *If effected,* it would set the world by the ears. . .

The women were undaunted by such reactions and their movement gained momentum. The Seneca Falls Convention was followed by conventions in other states. In 1850, the first national convention was held. In 1852, another national convention was held in Syracuse, NY, bringing together the two women who were to lead the movement for the next 30 years, Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902), and Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906). Each of the women differed greatly from the other, yet each was a complement to the other. Shoulder to shoulder they became the most effective women's team in history. Elizabeth Stanton describes their relationship:

> We were at once fast friends; in thought and sympathy we were one, and in the division of labor we exactly complemented each other. In writing we did better work together than either could do alone. . . together we have made arguments that have stood unshaken by the storms of thirty long years . . . Our speeches may be considered the united product of our two brains.

Susan B. Anthony was the practical one; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the leading intellectual force of the early feminist movement. Although the latter had insisted on the right of franchise, she actually felt it secondary to economic and marital equality: "Women's chief discontent is not with her politics, but with her social and particularly her marital bondage."

The third great woman leader of the 19th century, Lucy Stone (1818-1893), was well known across the nation. With strong convictions about women's rights, abolition and temperance, she regularly lectured from one end of the country to the other. She once stated her position this way:

> The last speaker alluded to this movement as being that of a few disappointed women. From the first years to which my memory stretches, I have been a disappointed woman. . . . It shall be the business of my life to deepen this disappointment in every woman's heart until she bows down to it no longer.

Strong words from a strong leader.

Deeply concerned about the legal rights of married women, Lucy Stone became famous for keeping her own name after marrying Henry Blackwell, in 1855.

The first decades of the 19th century were highlighted by many forceful personalities, and there was a quick awakening of women across the country. They formed into groups to talk about their rights. Conventions were held, articles written, and persuasive lectures given. It was a decade of conventions—publicized by the newspapers who reacted with amusement, shock, and often anger.

Although slavery remained the number one concern of the nation until after the Civil War, women's demand for equal rights was gaining more and more attention.

THE WEST

During the first half of the 19th century, between 1815 and 1853, this country expanded westward until the last frontier had been reached on the Pacific coast. Of the women who went west with their men on these dangerous and difficult migrations, only those who were enormously hardy survived. Those who were weak, men or women, succumbed to hardships along the way. Life was hazardous and physically exhausting; it resembled the life of the early colonists when men and women both worked from dawn to dusk. This type of existence continued in the West for many years even after the Civil War. Men and women displayed outstanding courage and stamina; they became heroes to their countrymen. One such person was Abigail Scott Duniway, whose life typified the heroic bravery of the pioneer. She became one of the leading feminists after the Civil War, and ultimately wrote the women's suffrage proclamation for the state of Oregon.

THE SOUTH

Because of its foundation on an agrarian and slave society, the South remained largely untouched by and unsympathetic to the sweeping economic and social changes occurring in the North. The plantation system continued to form the basic life for both blacks and whites. As in the past, white women frequently managed entire estates, overseeing 50 to 100 or more negro slaves. Black women suffered untold hardships and degradations under the plantation system.

Unlike the industrial North, the agrarian South was scarcely affected by the industrial revolution and the resultant improvements in education. The responsibilities of men and women remained sharply divided. In the years preceding the Civil War, the social reforms of the North were not supported by southern women, with few exceptions. These exceptions are notable, however. There was, for example, the impact of the efforts of the Grimké sisters and of the very brave black woman—Harriet Tubman, who guided runaway slaves north to freedom.

The Period Ends

When, at last, the Civil War engulfed the country, the two major movements in which so many women had been engaged—abolition and women's rights—came to an end. One ended happily and as intended: slavery was outlawed by the passage in 1865 of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. The other movement, women's rights, ended simply by being engulfed in the great concern of the nation—war between the states.

Summary

As the Civil War approached, attention focused on impending disaster. Nevertheless, much had also happened to women during the 30 years preceding the rebellion. Education had begun opening up and a few women had broken into the professions. The first women's labor union had been organized. But, above all, women had gotten together and demanded equality of the sexes. They were no longer content with separate spheres of activity. Self-determination in life's role, some women felt, was as much a woman's as a man's right.

AMERICAN WOMEN; 1607 TO THE PRESENT

by Polly Zane and John Zane

BOOKLET 3: 1860-1890

New Growth Follows Civil War, but Women Are Divided

The Proof Press
Berkeley, California

On the cover, the top portrait shows Sojourner Truth (1797-1883), on the left, and Harriet Tubman (1820?-1913); the lower portrait is of Mary "Mother" Jones (1830-1930). These pencil studies are by John Zane.

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Introduction

The Civil War—the bloodiest in the nation's history—took a heavy toll from both sides in battle deaths and casualties and in civilian losses, both emotionally and economically. For two or three decades thereafter, the nation convalesced—binding up its wounds and struggling to regenerate its economy.

THE CIVIL WAR

The Civil War started in April of 1861 and lasted four years; it was triggered by secession from the Union by the southern states, and the subsequent bombardment of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. But the Civil War sprang from such unbelievably complex elements that historians still do not agree on its basic causes. The popular belief, however, has always been that the cause was slavery. Emotions over this issue involved everyone, and when war came, men, women, and children lined up on one side or the other ready to do combat.

Thousands of women left their homes to fill the jobs left open by men gone off to war. Both the North and the South needed all the help they could get and women's volunteer organizations supplied it unstintingly. They raised money to relieve the problems of soldiers and prisoners-of-war; they ran hospitals; they provided nursing care; they raised money for medical supplies.

On a local scale women cooked, canned, and distributed food to the fighting men. They knitted garments and made clothing, including uniforms. Thousands of aid societies on both sides organized for these activities.

To bring order to the disjointed effort of so many individual organizations, Elizabeth Blackwell formed and directed the Women's Central Association for Relief which coordinated the efforts of several thousands of key women.

President Lincoln, feeling a national organization was necessary, established a Sanitary Commission, a citizen's organization to contribute to and supplement army medical care of the Union soldiers.

Dorothea Dix was appointed to an army post as superintendent of volunteer nurses, and trained hundreds of nurses for the hospitals and field stations. Two legendary women, Mary Bickerdyke, known as "Mother Bickerdyke," and Clara Barton both tirelessly nursed soldiers on the battle field. Later in life, Clara Barton, inspired by the International Red Cross, founded the American Red Cross. Beginning in 1882 she ran this organization for 22 years.

The South, more reluctant to accept women nurses than the North, nevertheless was forced to do so because it lacked other resources. Altogether, about 3200 women became nurses during the Civil War.

Coordination of volunteer work was lacking in the South, which had, no Sanitary Commission or similar organization. Women tended to contribute on an individual basis, producing food and caring for the wounded from their homes or local communities.

Many women acted as spies, scouts, or just plain camp followers, taking care of husbands and occasionally disguising themselves as soldiers and fighting as though part of the army. Some acted as undercover agents.

One such woman was Harriet Tubman (1820-1913). Born a slave in Maryland, she escaped to Philadelphia and became the most famous transporter of slaves to work for the Underground Railroad. Altogether, in the decade before the Civil War, she led over 300 slaves out of the South through to freedom and safety in the North, making 19 highly hazardous round trips to do so. The southerners put a high price on her head. During the Civil War, she acted as nurse, cook, and scout for the Union Army. After the war she continued to help her people, using as headquarters her own home in Ontario, Canada.

Isabella Baumfree (1797-1893), also born a slave, adopted the name "Sojourner Truth" when mystical visions convinced her she should become a preacher. During the 1850's she traveled west—preaching the Bible and attracting large crowds with her magnetic personality. Abolition and women's rights also concerned her, but always the cause of the slave and freedom for her people were paramount. In 1865, after the war, she was appointed to the Freedmen's Bureau; her job was to train black women to cope with the unaccustomed problems of self-sufficiency in a land of freedom.

The Freedmen's Bureau

When this deadliest American war finally ended in 1865, a 12-year period of reconstruction was declared by President Lincoln to bind up the wounds and ease the country back to normalcy. The question of the future of the slaves was one of the most difficult problems to be faced. Congress created the Freedmen's Bureau and through this organization aided the South in caring for, feeding, and educating the newly freed black slaves. Some 9000 women, both from the North and South, volunteered for teaching positions. Some of these women were black, as was Charlotte Forten, a Philadelphian and a staunch abolitionist.

The most dedicated and effective woman, however, to bring relief to the newly freed slaves was Josephine Griffing. Working tirelessly for many years, she found jobs and homes for the freed blacks in the northern states and in the expanding western territory. She also operated individual training schools for women as well as workshops in the needle trades (garment industries).

THE NATION

Between 1860 and 1890 the United States shifted from a farming to a manufacturing economy. Railroads had spread across the country in an intricate network of lines increasing potential business markets a hundred-fold. Clerical work increased when the newly-invented typewriter became available in the 1870's. Bankers and investors supplied vast amounts of money for new companies—iron, steel, coal, petroleum, factory-produced clothing, processed food, etc. Hand labor was being replaced by machine. The factory system itself, after 1865, changed to a system of standardized parts and a division of labor. Before this, individual workers produced entire garments. Now the worker might have the sole job of sewing on buttons, or perhaps cutting out one part of a pattern.

Urbanization of people and industry was on the upswing (in 1870, 25% of the population lived in cities). Immigration, always increasing, was now primarily from southern and eastern Europe rather than northern Europe and the British Isles.

Domestic and Social Sphere

Technological changes greatly influenced life patterns. Before the Civil War, farming and commerce occupied the country. After the Civil War, interest in the mechanization of domestic work and in creating labor-saving devices, both at home and in industry, took hold of the nation.

A few years earlier, Catharine Beecher, a great educator, had called for a "domestic science" for women (see Booklet 2). After the Civil War, cooking and sewing schools sprang up in the big cities. Domestic sciences were also taught in the land grant colleges of the midwest.

The use of coal as a source of energy produced some of the greatest domestic changes—coal was now used as the basic source of heat to generate steam power. Municipal plumbing and water works were developed, as were gas lighting, improved furnaces (small individual room furnaces replaced some of the central type furnaces), washtubs, commercially-made ice, and most important of all, sewing machines. Hundreds of thousands of sewing machines were produced and sold during the 1850's and 1860's. So wildly popular was this device that by 1870 over 200 companies were engaged in its manufacture.

Home canning became widespread by the middle 1880's, but commercially canned and packaged foods (initially produced during the war for armies in the field) were just beginning to appear on the market for the general public. Paper dress patterns were invented by Elizabeth Butterick, and a million had been sold by 1871. Factory produced clothes were available after the Civil War, an outcome of the factory-produced uniforms made during the war. (Most clothes were made at home, however, until the early 1900's.)

This was also a time of numerous inventions—inventions that would later transform the country into a highly mechanized society. The Pullman sleeping car was brought out in 1864, the suction vacuum cleaner, in 1869. Bell invented the telephone and took out a patent in 1876, and electrical lighting was first made practical in 1878. The electric iron was introduced in 1882.

These new inventions did not become widely available, however, until after 1900; in the American household the sewing machine and egg beater were the only widely used mechanical conveniences in the 1880's.

Although these mechanical aids contributed partly toward reducing housework and creating leisure time, there were two other factors that were far more important in this regard. One was the continued immigration of peoples, primarily from Europe. Many of the immigrant women settled into households as domestic servants asking very little in wages beyond board and room. The second factor was the determination on the part of middle-class women to have smaller families. The pioneering families of 10 to

15 children now seemed completely unnecessary. A two- or three-child family was much more appropriate, and left a great deal more free time for activities outside the home.

Young women in small numbers, began to go to college, while great numbers of older women turned to a fresh outlet—the woman's club, an institution that was to grow to tremendous size during the next half century.

Education

During the years after the Civil War, slowly increasing numbers of ambitious young women went off to college. Some went to the midwestern coeducational state colleges; others went to the two-year teacher training schools, or normal schools, as they were called. (By 1870 there were over 100 of these schools.) Others studied at one or another of the eastern women's colleges that had recently been founded—Vassar, Smith, Goucher, Radcliffe, Bernard, Wellesley, Bryn Mawr, Mt. Holyoke—and which offered a liberal education equal to that in men's colleges. A very few men's colleges, Cornell University for instance, began to admit women as well as men.

At the lower level, "academies" gave way to secondary or high schools. After 1870, girls were accepted equally with boys at both elementary and secondary levels.

Women in Industry

During the Civil War, women took over many of the jobs formerly held by men. Retail trade business employed sales women; new government war bureaus hired women to do clerical work. Some women had been working in government postal and patent offices before the war. Factories making war materials also employed women.

In 1862 the Federal Civil Service office opened its doors to women when the Treasury Department hired its first female employee. The War and Post Office Department also hired women.

Once the war was over, women tended to stay in the labor market, but not many held onto their Civil Service or factory jobs. The industrial job market had now become saturated with immigrants and rural farm people moving to the cities. During the 1880's and 90's a new wave of immigrants from Poland, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the Balkans arrived following in the paths of the Irish and Germans. These Eastern Europeans poured into the big manufacturing cities of the northeast, and into the Pennsylvania mining towns—filling the tenements and saturating the job market as they supplied industry with cheap unskilled labor.

Most of the working-class women were forced into the lowest-paid least-skilled jobs in the country—domestic, sales, factory, and clerical help. A high proportion of black women worked—mainly as agricultural hands, and as domestic servants. In 1870, only 3% of black women were able to get factory jobs.

Although machines were fast replacing hand labor, much piece work was still being done—in the garment industry and in the production of such items as umbrellas, shoes, hats, artificial flowers, etc. These were called the "sweated trades." A normal workday lasted 11 to 14 hours, and six days made up a normal work week. Pay was by the piece, not by the hour, and was 50% to 70% lower than men's. Women's participation in regular factory work declined during this period.

Under these conditions, women strove to become part of the trade union movement, which, during these 30 years from 1860-90, was extremely active. But it operated primarily for men.

The Knights of Labor, however, one of the strongest unions for a short while, welcomed women—by 1869 it had created a special department for them. One of the great women labor organizers of the day was Mary "Mother" Jones. After the death from yellow fever of her husband and children in 1867, she devoted 50 years of her life to the labor movement, first under the Knights of Labor, and later for the United Mine Workers. She was also concerned with child labor, and once marched a group of factory children 145 miles (as the story goes) to confront President Theodore Roosevelt at the White House. (In 1890, 603,000 children under 14 years of age were part of the labor force.)

By and large, women fared badly in the union movement. The small women's unions—laundresses, seamstresses, cigar makers, etc.—were mostly ineffective, and the great majority of women were not unionized at all.

Business

Rapid economic expansion after the war seemed to be solely the responsibility of men. Technological advancements such as improved typewriters, adding machines, and the telephone appeared in the late 19th century and accelerated the tempo of the business world. Women's businesses were few and tended to deal mostly with items of 'interest to women only—clothing, combs, brushes, gloves, hats, etc. Some women, like Hetty Green and Lydia Pinkham, were exceptions, but their husbands' support had a great deal to do with their success.

Professions

Exclusionist tactics and social disapproval had kept most women out of the professions, but a few of the barriers were breaking down. Teaching, nursing, and writing were three of the most accessible professions to women.

Teaching. During the Civil War, the shortage of male teachers brought a great number of women into the schools, and afterwards, during the reconstruction period, as mentioned earlier, almost 9000 women volunteered to help teach in the South. This trend did not stop. Whereas, in 1860, only 25% of the teachers were women, by 1880 almost two thirds of all elementary and secondary teachers were women. Teacher training schools opened up, especially in the mid-west, to train the growing number of women entering the field. Today teaching is still considered to be a female profession.

Nursing. The second most attractive field open to women was nursing. Some 3000 women trained as nurses during the Civil War and proved themselves to be proficient and useful. As a result, one of the large hospitals in Boston opened a nursing school especially for women. The first white woman graduated in 1873, the first Negro, in 1879. Bellevue hospital in New York also opened a nurses' training school in 1873, and from that time on nursing, like teaching, became a women's profession.

Writing. Writing as a career was always open to women. For one thing, no professional training or higher education was necessary; for another, the work could be done at home while attending to whatever household duties arose.

After the Civil War, women began again to produce a huge volume of written work—popular novels, sentimental poetry, regional stories, and journalistic articles.

Mass circulation magazines continued to prosper. One of those which was above average in quality and at the same time appealed to a whole new market, was *St. Nicholas Magazine,* a publication written solely for children.

Of the great literary figures of the day, several stand out as representing different aspects of the period: Louisa May Alcott, whose book, *Little Women* (1868), along with many others, made her extremely popular and rich; Sarah Orne Jewett, a popular novelist; and Emily Dickinson, an unusual and eccentric person and one of the greatest poets of all time. Unfortunately, Emily Dickinson's poetry did not receive acclaim while she was alive. Fame came, but not until long after her death.

Out of the west came another female writer, Jessie Fremont. After year's of travel and adventure with her husband, John C. Fremont, they lost their money. Mrs. Fremont immediately turned to writing as their sole means of support. Her travelling reminisences were an immediate success.

Medicine. Professional barriers were difficult to overcome in the medical world. In 1860 there were a few small rural medical schools which accepted women students but not one of the large city ones. However, by 1870 there were three, and the coeducational University of Michigan also accepted women. One of the three medical colleges accepting women was in New York Medical College for women, founded (in 1868) by Elizabeth Blackwell. By 1890 there were more than a dozen medical schools which accepted women students.

Internship was another problem facing women. Established hospitals would not accept them, so it was necessary for women to open their own dispensaries to obtain training. Women were also handicapped by lack of financial aid which was always available to male medical students.

Law and the Ministry. Law was easier for women to break into than medicine although there were still many obstacles. State law regulated the licensing of lawyers and most states admitted only men. Three women who struggled against the system were Belva Lockwood, Myra Bradwell, and Charlotte Ray.

When Belva Lockwood (1830-1917) tried to enter law school she was told "her presence would distract young men" and for this she was turned down. Eventually however, she did obtain a license and then undertook to lobby Congress for the right to practice law before the Supreme Court. Her success in 1879 was a landmark for women.

Myra Bradwell, (1831-1894), another determined woman, studied law under her husband and later published one of the first and best legal newspapers, the *Chicago Legal News*. Although by this time she had passed every required legal examination, the state of Illinois refused to give her a license—because she was a woman. She, too, eventually won her case and was granted a license. But it took many years.

The first black woman to become a lawyer was Charlotte Ray (1850-1911). She was admitted to the bar in Washington, DC. After many years of struggle to practice law, however, she finally was forced to give up. Prejudice against her as a woman and as a black kept her from earning a livelihood.

Similarly, the ministry was reluctant to accept women into its ranks. Unwanted and socially ostrasized in theological schools, all but the most intrepid were kept from the field. Two who were not intimidated were Olympia Brown, the first fully ordained woman minister, and Anna Howard Shaw, who obtained her theological degree but later turned to women's rights as her primary interest.

Library work. A new field opened up to women around the 1870's: librarianship. Along with nursing and teaching, this vocation continues to this day as a successful full-time profession for women.

Music, Dance, and Theater. Beginning in the 1860's and 70's, many women were drawn to music, dance, and drama. Although at first frowned upon, these art forms soon provided, as they still do today, very lucrative and successful vocations for women.

Politics and Public Welfare

Unusual circumstances brought a few women to public prominence, but by and large women did not participate actively in politics during this last half of the 19th century.

Of the few women who were exceptions, perhaps the most widely known was the somewhat notorious Victoria Woodhull (1838-1927), who, with her sister, came to fame for a variety of reasons. Spiritualists at first, they later turned to the stock market to become the first female stock brokers—and very successful, too. Victoria then took up women's rights as a cause,. speaking before Congress on women's behalf. Forming her own politial party, Victoria then ran for president of the United States—unsuccessfully, of course. Involvement in some scandalous matters eventually put both women in jail for a brief period. Finally they repaired to England to marry rich and successful husbands.

Other prominent women mentioned earlier included: Dorothea Dix, Superintendent of volunteer nurses during the Civil War; Sojourner Truth, appointed to the Freedom's Bureau by President Lincoln; Josephine Griffing, also of the Freedmen's Bureau; and Belva Lockwood, who (after receiving her law degree) was nominated for president by the Equal Rights party in 1884.

Social Reform

With increased leisure, and decreased opportunities in the business and professional field (with the exceptions of writing, nursing, librarianship, and teaching) middle- and upper-class women once more directed their energies to clubs and reform movements. By and large, before 1890 most groups were small, non-controversial gatherings interested in intellectual pursuits. The New England Women's Club, founded by Julia Ward Howe (in Boston), and the Sorosis Club of New York were two of the first clubs to be formed. By 1890 many of these clubs had joined together to form the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC).

In rural America where the Grange became so popular, women gathered together primarily to seek company and friendship and to get away from the isolation of the farm.

Temperance. By far the most popular reform was the temperance movement.

It began at a leisurely pace in the midwest during the 1830's and 40's as a dedicated campaign against the use of alcoholic beverages. Then, in 1874, with surprising speed the movement swept the country and all the local societies were organized under one single name: The National Women's Christian Temperance Union. For the next quarter century its popularity grew beyond that of any other woman's organization. Much of this was due to the dynamic leadership of Frances Willard, who for twenty years—1879-1898—inspired the 200,000 members, leading them on to embrace many other reforms, including suffrage for women.

With the depression of 1873, however, increased unemployment and poverty aroused many women to other serious reform activity. Of paramount interest were the problems of women and children—the abolition of child labor, relief to the sick and destitute, aid to the poor, and employment training and guidance. The YWCA, starting at first in 1874 with small groups in Boston and New York, formed a meeting place for young working women and girls.

After 1870, kindergartens were introduced—an idea that came from Germany. Mostly private at this time, kindergartens were aimed at keeping children off the streets and helping working mothers by freeing them from child care.

Dorothea Dix continued her crusades for the mentally ill and the handicapped, and for the establishment of correctional institutions.

Concern for the American Indian led to the organization of the Women's National Indian Association. One of the great Indian families of the time was the La Flesche family, part Indian and part French. Two sisters, Susette and Susan, became outstading spokeswomen for their people. A strikingly handsome woman, Susette toured the country in 1873 lecturing on behalf of her people and their need for permanent possession of land. In this way she was instrumental in the passage of the Dawes Act of 1887, allotting lands to individual Indians.

Sarah Winnemucca, a Paiute Indian, also fought hard for her people's rights. She gave countless public lectures and presented numerous petitions to Congress and to the President.

Evangelism spread across the country, and Mary Baker Eddy became one of the most influential women of her day. She established one of the most successful churches in this country, the Church of Christ, Scientist—known to most people as the Christian Science Church. Before her Ellen White had helped co-found the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Other women were attracted to missionary work—some raised money at home, others were sent to various parts of the globe to spread the gospel.

Women's Rights

During the Civil War period, all activity to promote women's rights was suspended. Women had turned their interests toward the plight of the Negro; they poured their energy into the passage of the 13th Amendment. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony worked hard to obtain signatures for a petition to Congress favoring the Amendment, and Anna Dickinson, a newcomer, gained temporary fame as a spokeswoman and orator for the black cause. Lucy Stone joined the cause and thousands of people, great and small, lent their support. The National Women's Loyal League was formed solely to secure passage of the 13th. Over 400,000 individuals signed petitions favoring the amendment. In 1865 the amendment passed and slavery in the U.S. was abolished.

As the war ended, leaders of the women's rights movement once again turned their efforts to the feminist cause. They tried desperately to obtain the vote through a change in the wording of the 14th and 15th Amendments. The 14th granted citizenship and the right to vote to all "male inhabitants." If the word "male" were omitted, then women might be included. The 15th said that no state could deny the right to vote because of race or color. If the words "or sex" had been added to "race" and "color" then women would have had the vote. In both cases women failed in their attempt to change the wording. The 14th Amendment became the law of the land in 1865, the 15th in 1869. The black man now had the vote and women did not. (On a local basis the first note of encouragement came from the Territory of Wyoming, which granted women the vote in 1869.)

During the years immediately following the Civil War, serious disagreements arose amongst those women who appeared to be supporting the same cause—the cause of women's suffrage. The American Equal Rights Association had been formed in 1866 to further the cause of women, with both male and female members. A split came, however, over policy and in 1869 the Equal Rights Association divided into two groups.

The National Women's Suffrage Association (NWSA) was led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Their goal was to achieve suffrage through a federal amendment to the Constitution. More radical in nature than the second group, they refused to put the black man's problems before their own and so would not support, and in fact actively opposed, passage of the 15th Amendment. Their dedication was to one cause only—suffrage for women. Toward this end, Susan B. Anthony voted in her home town of Rochester, New York, in 1872. For this she was arrested but jubilantly reported the event to her friend Elizabeth Stanton:

> Dear Mrs. Stanton: Well, I have been and gone and done it! positively voted the Republican ticket—straight—this A.M.

The second suffrage group, the American Women's Suffrage Association (AWSA), was led by Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe, who a few years earlier had authored the famous "Battle Hymn of The Republic." Their tactics were to achieve suffrage through passage of state amendments. They were also willing to let the black have his victories now and wait until a later time for women's suffrage. They therefore supported the 14th and 15th Amendments.

A major contribution was also made by Lucy Stone and her husband who jointly published and edited the *Woman's Journal* which for almost 50 years reported news about women's activities throughout the entire nation.

The schism between these two groups (NWSA & AWSA) lasted for twenty years and seriously affected the power of the women's rights movement. Membership ultimately declined in both organizations, never exceeding a total of 10,000. Eventually, realizing that common interests were more important than differences, the two groups merged into one, the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA). This was in 1890. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was the first president, but she and the other old guard were shortly to give way to a new generation of women suffragists.

Summary

The first decades following the Civil War were spent in unifying the country and restoring its economic stability. Social reform, including women's rights, received some but not a great deal of attention. The black's problems occupied the nation first, economic expansion second.

The country had grown from an agrarian to an industrial economy. It had expanded from a population of 31 million people with four million slaves to a population of 63 million people. Black men had received the vote; women still had not.

AMERICAN WOMEN; 1607 TO THE PRESENT

by Polly Zane and John Zane

BOOKLET 4: 1890-1920

The Progressive Era; World War I; the Final Suffrage Drive

The Proof Press
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The portraits on the cover show
Jane Addams (1860-1935), at top, and
Margaret Sanger (1883-1966), below. These
pencil studies are by John Zane.

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Introduction

The end of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th brought this country to a new peak of industrialization. With it came a concentration of wealth in the hands of a relatively small number of people, increased and varied immigration, and a growing trend towards urbanization as rural Americans moved into the cities, and immigrants rooted themselves in the seaports where they had landed.

THE NATION

Technologically, quite a few changes were taking place. The steel industry became symbolic of some of these changes—automobiles, bridges, skyscrapers and railroads—all depended on steel.

Henry Ford revolutionized the car industry, utilizing new assembly line techniques coupled with the advantages of cutting tools and interchangeable parts. By 1913 Ford cars were being mass produced; by 1920 over seven million Fords had been sold.

The telephone was invented byAlexander Graham Bell in 1876; ten million had been installed in American homes and offices by 1915. Along with the telephone, typewriters and adding machines were becoming standard office equipment.

Profits soared for companies manufacturing home appliances. The first practical motor-driven washing machine was marketed, although the old-fashioned "woman-powered" washtub and corrugated scrubbing board continued to be used in most homes for many years. Gas was used in cooking stoves and electric lights were available.

To further ease household chores at the practical level, canned goods, delicatessen foods, and baked products were easily bought. In addition to practical concerns, Americans found ways to make life pleasanter; the phonograph machine brought the sound of music into the home. And mankind's ancient dream of catching motion in pictures came true around the time of World War I—commercially feasible motion pictures were developed and public enthusiasm was boundless.

Against this background of growing technological ease, social and economic forces were changing the lives of millions of working class people.

The explosive increase in population which occurred in the United States during these years (from 63 million in 1890 to almost 106 million in 1920) created a whole array of problems new to this country.

Powerful economic forces, unrestrained by government action, exploited the bottomless reservoir of cheap unskilled laborers. As businesses grew, they combined to create monopolies. Corrupt practices ensued as profits soared and prices increased. The country drifted into a period of severe unemployment and economic depression. The years between 1893 and 1907 were particularly hard hit by depressions.

For those living in the cities (which doubled in size during the thirty year period from 1890 to 1920), social conditions were worsening. Large sections of many cities became slum areas as a result of overcrowding, unemployment, and poverty; poor sanitation caused disease, and general degradation and discouragement led to crime.

The gap was widening between the rich and the poor as the country shifted more and more from an agricultural to an industrial economy. By 1920 the value of manufactured goods was equal to three times that of farm products. The United States was the leading industrial nation of the world.

THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

Out of these dynamic forces, the progressive era was born. Spontaneously, there began a drive for social, economic, and political reform—a drive that grew into proportions never before experienced in the history of the country.

Two basic conditions created this climate for reform. One, mentioned earlier, was the growing number of poor, uneducated city dwellers in need of jobs, money, and improved living conditions; the other, the ever-growing class of college-educated women eager to find useful occupations outside the home.

Domestic Life

By the 1890's, several social and economic factors had brought about changes in the lives of middle class women. As the new century approached, kitchen and household appliances continued to be ever more available and efficient.in saving time. (Electrical appliances, however, were not commonly used until after the 1920's.) Commercially prepared foods and ready-made clothing became available to the middle class family.

Further erosion of urban women's traditional responsibilities occurred as large numbers of female immigrants became household servants—underpaid and overworked.

At about this time, families, particularly upper-class families, began to grow smaller. Both birth control information and the money to afford the costly process of divorce were among the privileges of wealth, and both contributed to smaller upper-class families. Similarly, America's middle class women were determined to have fewer children—a conscious drive to create free time for pursuits outside the home.

Still other considerations brought change. Although marriage and the raising of children was still the goal of 90% of women in 1900, certain conditions were leading to a redefinition of the function of motherhood. Not only were the demands made on women by the family and home declining, but nearly all children were now educated in schools, doctors (not mothers) took care of health problems, and almost no crafts and businesses were conducted at home.

In addition, Victorian standards of conduct were gradually easing and the beginnings of a freer society could be seen. Clothing for women became simpler and the styles less frilly. For instance, the sheath, which became popular in 1908, was a slim straight-lined dress worn without petticoats.

All of these factors combined to make the middle-class woman increasingly "unemployed" and discontented with her lot. Some of the changes also affected lower-class working women; their standards of conduct and dress, for example, were just as liberal as those of the middle-class, and some of the new technological advances were equally within their reach.

But long hours of work left little time to think of other things. Thus, the wage earning woman did not usually become active in reform movements, except perhaps the labor movement. This was even more true of immigrant women, who not only had to work but who had to adjust to a new language and customs as well. This difficulty in adjusting applied not only to Europeans but to the Chinese and Japanese women who arrived on the west coast between the 1860's and the early 1900's, just a few decades after the immigration of Chinese and Japanese men who came here as laborers and farmers.

The immigration of Chinese women began and ended before the Japanese influx. Only a few Chinese women accompanied the men who began arriving around 1860; but the proportion of women to men was pitifully small —about one to thirty in 1880. In another two years, almost all Chinese immigration ended with the Exclusion Act of 1882.

A decade or so later Japanese women were immigrating to the west coast. Some of these women were known as "picture brides"—young women whose families had arranged marriages for them by sending the girls' pictures to the young men who had already immigrated to the new country. It worked somewhat like advertising. Cost of transportation often made it impossible to carry on the traditional manner of courtship. In 1907 the "Gentlemen's Agreement" with Japan stopped most Japanese immigration to the United States. As with the Chinese, the proportion of Japanese women to men was also extremely small. This situation caused many cultural and social problems for the Asiatics until immigration resumed—partially after World War II, and fully after 1968.

Legal Status

Most of the discriminatory legislation against women had been modified by 1890, and a majority of states had amended their laws so that women began to have some legal control over their own property, earnings, and children. If divorced, a woman had a chance of sharing child custody with her husband. In some states she also had control of her own inherited property. Just before World War I, the word "obey" was deleted from the woman's part of civil marriage vows. The same deletion was made in some church ceremonies. However, many discriminatory laws were still carried on the books. New York law, as an example, ruled that smoking in public places was illegal for woman, but not for men.

Education

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, girls had gained admission to elementary and secondary schools, and frequently had more time to devote to education than boys, who often found it necessary to leave school to earn a living. The trend toward admitting women to college, which began after the Civil War, continued; by 1900 approximately 89% of the colleges, universities, and professional schools were admitting women, although most coeducational institutions admitted women on a low quota basis only.

Around 1900, women represented a sizable minority of undergraduate students. A few went on to graduate school and some entered professional schools. Many were attending women's colleges, of which there were 125 at the end of the 19th century. Normal (teacher-training) schools also accounted for a good proportion of women students. In the early 1900's, secondary teacher-training course requirements were increased to four years.

Many of these college-educated women worked before getting married, and some selected careers instead of marriage. Two decades earlier, unmarried women would have been pitied. Now, it was possible for spinsters, like the famous settlement house worker, Jane Addams, to be admired for the humanitarian work they were doing, or for their success in their fields, whatever they might be.

Women's Clubs and Reform Activity

Increased leisure and the growing inclination for outside activity accelerated the trend towards club activity which had begun during the last quarter century. This trend, in turn, resulted in an unprecedented urge toward association—not only in clubs, but in a great variety of organizations, societies, leagues, etc.

Artistic, literary, cultural, and educational activities were the first interests to draw these women together. Later, when social problems became clearly defined, women turned to civic reform and political activism. Black women had the additional purpose of fighting racial discrimination.

Millions of women joined together in these associations during the years between 1890 and 1920. Most groups started on a local basis, but by the 1920's there were quite a few national organizations: the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Young Women's Christian Association, the National Council of Women, the National Council of Jewish Women, the National Congress of Mothers (later to become the Parent-Teachers Association), the National Consumer's League, the Women's Trade Union League, and others. In 1890 many women's clubs united in the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), which by 1916 had two million members. In fact, by 1920 three million women could be said to be involved in club activity.

Both Jewish and black women formed their own national organizations during this period. After the Russian pogroms of 1888, large numbers of Jewish immigrants poured into this country. To help Jewish women integrate into the American culture, Hannah Solomon founded the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) in 1893. Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization, was formed in 1912.

The Chicago World's Fair of 1893 was the spark that brought black women workers together. Excluded from most activities at the fair (and later from white women's clubs), black women resolved to form their own clubs. Black women's organizations had existed since before the Civil War but were mostly anti-slavery or church related. After the war, their organizations grew larger and were separate from the church. In the 1890's several national clubs sprang up—dedicated to self improvement, social service, and the solving of race problems. Mary Church Terrell, a highly educated woman, became a leader in the black women's club movement. In 1896 the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) was founded, primarily through the efforts of Josephine Ruffin, and embarked on a dedicated program to help the black people. By 1915 the NACW had 50,000 members. Mary Church Terrell was its first president. She worked for black people's rights until her death in 1954.

One of the few white clubs to welcome black women was the YWCA, nationally organized in 1906 by Grace Dodge. Its purpose at that time was to give aid and assistance to young city girls, and it welcomed both blacks and whites.

In many respects, club activity had a truly liberating effect on women. The things they became concerned with now had broadened from domestic matters to social and political problems.

Settlement Houses

One of the newest and most innovative concepts in reform was the settlement house. Jane Addams (1860-1935) and Ellen Gates Starr, pioneers in this field, began the Hull House settlement in 1889 after studying the settlement houses of Great Britain. They, and later many others, moved into houses situated in the slums and from there offered friendliness, help, and home life to those living in the poverty-stricken tenements of Chicago. Lillian Wald, another great settlement house worker, operated the Henry Street Settlement House in New York City. Public health became her greatest concern.

Around the turn of the century, over 50 settlement houses were operating in the northeastern cities of this country. They embraced a multitude of reforms: improved municipal housing and sanitation regulations, garbage collection, child nutrition, women's suffrage, and world peace. They attacked, both politically and legally, the exploitation of working women and children by big business, and advocated minimum wage and hour laws. Many future reform leaders obtained their experience and incentive from the settlement house activities.

Birth Control

For the working class woman, the crusade for birth control was probably the most important of all reforms, alleviating the proverty and misery which accompany uncontrolled growth of lower-class families. Margaret Sanger (1880-1966), born in New York City, was from very early childhood affected by the relationship between poverty and large numbers of unwanted children. Even within her own family she noted, "Mother bore eleven children. She died at forty-eight. My father lived until he was eighty." Mrs. Sanger spent her life trying to help women avoid pregnancies they did not want.

> Constantly I saw the ill effects of childbearing in women of the poor. Mothers whose physical condition was inadequate to combat disease were made pregnant, through ignorance and love, and died. Children were left motherless, fathers were left hopeless and desperate—often feeling like criminals, blaming themselves for the wife's death—all because these mothers were denied by law knowledge to prevent conception.

Margaret Sanger tried to make birth control information available to poor women who could not otherwise obtain it. Certain laws in New York, for instance, had made it illegal to give family planning and birth control information to the public. Federal law classified birth control information as obscene.

From 1915 on, the birth control movement grew. The National Birth Control League was founded that year and in 1916 Margaret Sanger and her sister set up the first birth control clinic in New York City. It was closed by police and Mrs. Sanger was given a 30-day jail sentence.

Her book, *Women and the New Race*, published in 1920, states: ". . .No woman can call herself free until she can choose consciously whether she will or will not be a mother. . .." In 1937 Margaret Sanger had the satisfaction of seeing birth control information finally legalized in the United States.

Other Reforms

One of the great reformers of the time was the journalist, Ida Wells Barnett. In the 1890's, her crusade against lynching did much to halt the widespread killing of blacks by the Ku Klux Klan and other white groups.

Indian reform continued, helped considerably by the efforts of Indian women. Susan La Flesche, a physician and sister of Susette (see Booklet 3), eventually became one of the leaders of the Omahas and went to Washington, DC, to protest treatment of the Indians.

A successful defender of the public's interest was Ida

Tarbell, journalist, lecturer, and historian whose efforts in the early 1900's helped to expose corruption in the Standard Oil Company.

Also during this period, the WCTU continued to gain adherents and to embrace a wide range of reforms under the leadership of Frances Willard. After her death, in 1898, the WCTU's interests narrowed once again to its original single concern: temperance. In 1919 the efforts of all those interested in abolishing intoxicants brought about the passage of the 18th Amendment, forbidding the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.

Women in reform movements could point to a few gains. In 1906 the Pure Food and Drug Act was passed, largely through pressure from women. And in 1916 the Child Labor Act was passed, restricting the working hours of children in certain occupations. Two years later, however, this act was declared unconstitutional and it was only subsequently that child labor legislation was permanently enacted.

During those years of the Progressive Era, as middle-class women's interests shifted from simple club activity to involvement with serious social reform, they found themselves working side by side with men in many reform organizations. But it was not truly "side by side." Once again, women experienced the same frustrations that they had faced when working as abolitionists—feelings of discrimination, inequality, and inferiority. Men assumed most of the responsibilities and all of the top positions; women were forced into the less conspicuous, less meaningful jobs. This second affront to women in their serious attempt to help the downtrodden, unfortunate segments of society led directly to the second great push of the women's rights movement.

Political Status

By 1900 many states allowed women to vote in school and local elections, but only four—Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and Idaho— allowed women to vote in state and federal elections. If you were not allowed to vote, of course, you were not qualified to sit on juries or hold public office.

However, as time passed, women's clubs slowly shifted their interests from domestic affairs to political questions at the local, state, and national levels. With increasing experience as public speakers and as lobbyists, American women were becoming highly effective in campaigning for issues as well as for candidates. Jeannette Rankin is symbolic of this change. She became the first women to be elected to Congress, a feat she accomplished in 1916.

Working Class Women

In 1900, 20% of all working people were women, about five million altogether, not counting those who still worked on the farms. (By 1910 another 5% were working.) Most of these women worked in the cities holding the lowest-paying, least-skilled jobs. Two million women, most of them immigrants and blacks, worked as domestic servants or in factory jobs, mainly in the textile and garment industries. Others worked at sales, clerical, and other service jobs. The tremendous market for consumer goods had created a two fold need: sales people to do the selling, and clerical workers to keep track of the bookkeeping. Women were learning the new skills of typing and stenography. By the 1890's, schools across the country were successfully teaching women how to typewrite. Between 1910-20 one million women (both black and white) had joined the nation's clerical force.

Of all working women, those who worked in the factories were probably the worst off. Such workers were largely immigrants, who, as strangers, were the most vulnerable and needy and least able to refuse the need for cheap labor. Their lives were hard. In New York City, for instance, women worked 11 to 18 hours a day. Pay for women was just about half what it was for men in comparable jobs. Women factory workers tended to hold jobs in women-oriented industries—textile, clothing, and food processing. In the South, some women worked in cigar and tobacco factories.

Labor and Union Activity

Women attempted to improve working conditions by using union methods, mainly through strikes. After 1900, the labor situation worsened for women. The Knights of Labor, which had formerly befriended women, lost power in the 1890's. Thereafter the American Federation of Labor became the most powerful union in the country, but it was unsympathetic to women and especially to unskilled workers of either sex.

Women countered this hostility with an increase in their own union and strike activity. A few strong women led strikes in special fields. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, fiery labor leader of the textile workers, led the "Bread and Roses" strike of 1912. "Mother" Jones continued her work for the coal miners and their families.

Female unions were organized in the early 1900's and struck against such industries as laundries, glovemakers, and textile manufacturers. A large group of shirtwaist workers struck in 1909 in New York City. Similar strikes took place in the garment industries of Philadelphia and Chicago. In many of these efforts women were supported by the settlement house workers who became sophisticated in political methods.

About the turn of the century two new organizations were founded for the sole purpose of supporting the working-class woman—the National Consumer's League and more radical National Women's Trade Union League.

The National Consumer's League, led by former settlement-house worker Florence Kelley, was founded in an effort to involve the consumer in women's working conditions, and subsequently to put pressure on companies to improve those conditions.

The National Women's Trade Union League was formed to help unionize women and this was done for many years, backing most of women's efforts to unionize and strike for better conditions.

In spite of all such activities, however, the percentage of women workers who were organized in trade union activity remained pitifully small—approximately 2% in 1915. Strongest union support was among factory workers.

During the first World War conditions improved slightly. Women went into iron, steel, and munitions factories, men's service jobs, and government bureaus. The actual increase in women workers, nevertheless, was only about 5%. With the return of peace, many Civil Service jobs formerly closed to women were opened to them without sexual discrimination. This change in policy came as recognition of women's fine performance during the war.

Between 1900 and 1920, a few states had passed protective legislation for women. Oregon led the way with its 1903 restriction limiting a woman's work day to ten hours or less. Other states followed suit.

Thus by 1920 a few gains had been made for wage earning women, but progress was as slow as it had been in the past and would continue to be in the future.

Professions

Teaching, Nursing, Librarianship

Some women were able to convert their reform activities to paying jobs as social welfare workers, but most middle-class women who needed or wanted to work turned to the two professions most likely to accept them, nursing and teaching. Young single women, particularly, found this an easy way to support themselves away from home. In 1910, 80% of the nation's elementary and secondary teachers were women.

As women poured into these two fields, men who had previously been teachers and nurses tended to leave for other professions or to move up the ladder to administrative or higher paying positions. (A similar change occurred in the clerical field.) By and large, nursery school, kindergarten, elementary, and secondary teachers were women; college and university professors were men.

Women with advanced degrees from eastern colleges usually found jobs teaching in women's colleges. Only a few went into research fields, and when they did, they went into areas that men were not concerned with

—psychology, anthropology, and astronomy.

Women also became librarians, in fact they more or less dominated the field. Today, teaching, nursing, and librarianship are still primarily women's occupations.

Home Economics

Home economics, a field which had opened up for women after the Civil War, continued to be an attractive profession, but most of the high level research in home products and foods was done by men in large industrial plants. Women turned to dietetics as men assumed leadership in home economics and nutrition.

Medicine and Dentistry

Although most medical schools finally admitted women on a token basis, it was hard for women to establish practices. If they succeeded, it was often in fields traditionally related to women's roles—gynecology and pediatrics. Others went into public health. By 1910, approximately 6% of the doctors and 3% of the dentists were women.

Law

The problems of establishing a law practice were similar to those encountered in medicine. Although law schools admitted a few women, it was difficult for women graduates to obtain clients. Thus, many women lawyers reluctantly accepted legal positions that were of a semi-clerical nature.

Black women could enter the teaching and nursing professions, but other professions were practically closed to them. A few enterprising black women were able to establish successful businesses, however.

As women gradually entered the professions, they formed their own professional associations since they were excluded from most men's associations. In 1919 these groups united to form the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. This organization continues to this day.

Women in the Arts

Women writers continued to abound. Widely read novelists like Willa Cather and Edith Wharton produced some of the best fiction written in this country.

Women distinguished themselves in other art fields: painting, sculpting, and commercial art; music, acting, and dance. Isadora Duncan astounded the world with her creative informal dancing. Liberating it from the traditional modes of expression, she revolutionized the concept of dance. Her free style—with flowing dress and bare feet—expressed an exciting, new personal approach. In later years, other women were to follow her lead.

Women's Rights

The political climate during the 1890's and early 1900's was radical and explosive. In the west and midwest, farmers found themselves struggling against poverty and blamed the economic system. In an attempt to cope with these problems, farmers formed the Populist Party. Similarly, the eastern communities were faced with increasingly difficult social problems as a result of uncurbed economic expansion and unrestrained industrialization.

This volatile situation was ripe for women's political activity. In 1890 the two major women's groups (The National Women's Suffrage Association, and the American Women's Suffrage Association), after struggling separately for 20 years, joined to form one organization, the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA). A new generation of women took over the leadership. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony shortly gave way to Anna Howard Shaw and Carrie Chapman Catt. Although the former was the active head, it was Carrie Chapman Catt who was the true leader —forceful, effective, and completely dedicated to the one goal—suffrage—through orderly legal procedure.

In marked contrast to Carrie Catt's steady and disciplined methods was the flamboyant approach of political activist, Alice Paul. Trained in England during the suffrage drive there, she was a believer in militant tactics and the use of political power to achieve suffrage. (See booklet 5 for more information about Alice Paul.) In 1913, Alice Paul entered the suffrage drive by leading a parade before the capital building in Washington, DC, the day before Wilson's inauguration. Inevitably the two approaches clashed and in 1914 Alice Paul left NAWSA, heading a separate organization, the Congressional Union. In 1916, she enlarged the scope of her organization and formed the National Women's Party (NWP) to work politically at the state level against Wilson's renomination. She believed that suffrage should be obtained through a federal amendment to the constitution and so far President Wilson had not given his support to the women's cause. NAWSA felt that action should proceed through state amendements.

During this period from 1910 to the beginning of World War I, the drive for suffrage gained vitality and momentum. Prior to that time, hundreds of separate suffrage drives had occurred, but they had borne little fruit. All across the country new suffrage organizations sprang to life after 1910. Older, more established organizations joined with these newer groups and added their strength to the movement.

WORLD WAR I

World War I started in 1914 but the United States did not enter the conflict until 1917. The suffrage drive was interrupted, as were most other reforms, when women involved themselves in the war effort.

Alice Paul was an exception. She and the NWP actively opposed President Wilson and participation in the war. In 1917 she and others began picketing the White House in a silent vigil. For one and a half years, at least two people were always stationed there holding their placards.

As had happened during the Civil War, most women volunteered to do relief work in the hospitals, to make bandages, and to raise money for medical supplies and weapons. They patriotically campaigned for the bond drives and meatless meals. A few women were able to enlist in the Navy as (female) yeomen. Again, women went to work in the farms and in the factories, taking over men's jobs wherever needed. At home they knitted and sewed millions of articles of clothing for their men in the front line trenches of Europe.

Suffrage Attained

Carrie Chapman Catt and NAWSA supported the war effort wholeheartedly, but they also continued to work for suffrage. Mrs. Catt had organized the final five-year push toward passage of the all important 19th Amendement. After the war ended, in 1918, the final stages found both suffrage groups, NAWSA and NWP, working towards the same goal. Jeannette Rankin, the first woman representative, reintroduced the suffrage amendment in 1918. President Wilson finally lent his support and asked Congress to pass the amendment. In 1919 the 19th Amendment passed in both houses of Congress. It was ratified by the states in 1920. At long last, American women had attained the vote.

One unique contribution came from Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935), philosopher, lecturer, writer, and artist, who attacked the economic system underlying women's status in marriage and society. She maintained that economic equality, not suffrage, was the key to women's freedom. Her book, *Women and Economics*, laid the ground-work for feminism in the 20th century.

Summary

Passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution marked the end of a definite era of women's emancipation. It had been over 70 years since women had first demanded the right to vote. The struggle had been long and hard and consumed the energies of countless infinitely dedicated women. Carrie Chapman Catt later wrote:

> It is doubtful if any man, even among suffrage men, ever realized what the suffrage struggle came to mean to women. . . How much of time and patience, how much work, energy and inspiration, how much faith, how much hope, how much despair went into it. It leaves its mark on one, such a struggle.

The drive for suffrage on top of the reform movement had been all absorbing for many decades. It remained to be seen whether winning the vote really changed women's role in society. To Charlotte Perkins Gilman and to others it was a useful tool, but it was not the most crucial factor affecting women's equality and happiness. The next 50 years would tell.

AMERICAN WOMEN; 1607 TO THE PRESENT

by Polly Zane and John Zane

BOOKLET 5: 1920-1960

Women's Movement Stalls; World War II Opens New Jobs

The Proof Press
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[redacted]

The portraits on the cover show
Mary McLeod Bethune (1875-1955), at top, and
Alice Paul (1885-1977), below. These pencil
studies are by John Zane.

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Introduction

The 1920's brought an end to the tremendously vital Progressive Era. The concerted effort of millions of women had culminated in the passage of the 19th Amendment. Suffrage was finally achieved and women at last seemed liberated.

Women's Rights and Social Reform

It was hard to foretell in 1920 that the bright spirit of reform and the driving force of the women's movement would decline and enter a period of restrained inactivity lasting 40 years.

But in the optimistic and prosperous years following Allied victory in World War I, the outlook for the women's movement seemed very bright indeed. Large numbers of women in association with each other gave the appearance of strength and solidarity. Suffrage had just been won through the efforts of two million women in the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA). New national organizations had been formed—the National Federation of Business and Professional Women (NFBPW), in 1919, and the American Association of University Women (AAUW), in 1921.

The horrors, waste, and futility of war initiated interest in peace movements; two organizations were set up, one headed by Jane Addams, the great settlement worker, called the International League for Peace and Freedom, and the other by Carrie Chapman Catt, former head of NAWSA and forceful leader of the final suffrage drive, called the Committee on the Cause and Cure of War.

Carrie Chapman Catt also organized the League of Women Voters (LWV) to replace NAWSA, which was no longer necessary now that suffrage had been achieved. The LWV was a community-oriented organization for political education and legislative lobbying.

Other national groups seemed to be thriving. Dozens were organized, some new and some simply reoriented versions of older groups. Of these, perhaps ten or twelve* were significant for their attempts to effect improvement in such areas as cooperation between parent and teachers, consumer education, trade unions for women, discrimination against minorities, etc. This enthusiastic spirit of association culminated in two new feminist coalitions.

Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor

For some time women had felt a need to have their own labor representative in the federal government. In 1920 working through Congress, they succeeded, and the Women's Bureau was established in the Department of Labor. Its primary function was to gather and disseminate information about women's employment. It also effectively supported labor legislation.

Women's Joint Congressional Committee (WJCC)

Even though the Women's Bureau had been established, women felt something was needed—their own Congressional lobby. In 1920 most of the strong women's organizations joined together to form the Women's Joint Congressional Committee (WJCC). By 1922 it was considered to be the most powerful lobby in Washington.

The WJCC had two major objectives, and these were achieved within a very short time. The Sheppard-Towner

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*General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the National Council of Jewish Women, the National Council of Parents and Teachers, the National Women's Trade Union League, the National Consumer's League, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the National Association of Colored Women, and others.

Act, passed in 1921, provided money for maternal and infant care. The second objective, a constitutional amendment prohibiting child labor, was passed by Congress in 1924.

Another organization established in the 1920's was the American Birth Control League, founded by Margaret Sanger, who a decade earlier had begun the movement for birth control and family planning. The purpose of the new league was to educate women, to encourage research, and to gain support for laws permitting birth control.

By 1930, thirty birth control clinics had been established within the country, and, in 1937, Margaret Sanger saw her dream come true—the dissemination of birth control information was legalized in this country. This led to the formation of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. From that time one, birth control information became more available to those women who wanted it, and knew where and how to obtain it.

Anti-Feminism and the Decline of Support for Social Reform

In addition to the seeming strength of the old as well as the new women's organizations, the country as a whole had been enthusiastic over the new equality of women as exemplified in the passage of the 19th Amendment. Everyone anticipated a strong women's voting block, especially with the impetus of the League of Women Voters and its function of educating women on the important issues of the day.

Politicians also were enthusiastic over women's new status and invited many to participate in party politics.

State governments passed legislation designed to ease labor laws for women and to help qualify them for jury duty. Congress, spurred on by the WJCC, had passed the Sherman-Towner bill and the Child Labor Amendment (as stated above).

The early 1920's, therefore, seemed to portend a continued advance for women.

Such was not to be the case, however. Many disappointments were ahead. First and foremost, women did not exercise the franchise as anticipated. Fewer women voted than was expected and, of those who did, many voted as their husbands did or along strict class, race, or party lines. This was vastly disillusioning to the suffragists who had dedicated themselves to the passage of the 19th Amendment. Women seemed timid and uninterested in politics. Of NAWSA's two million members, only 10,000 switched to the League of Women Voters.

In Congress, the woman's cause lost support after a few years. The Sheppard-Towner bill failed to obtain a renewal of funds in 1929, and the Women's Joint Congressional Committee became less effective, and acted primarily as a clearinghouse for information. The states failed to ratify the Child Labor Amendment, and the Supreme Court ruled against child labor and minimum wage legislation for women. Women's labor organizations also went into a decline.

Trouble Within the Women's Rights Movement

In addition to the setbacks mentioned above, the Women's movement had troubles within its own ranks. Alice Paul (1885-1977), a Quaker, college graduate, and trained social worker has led the more radical of the two women's groups during the previous decade (see Booklet 4). She was as dead set against the conservative middle-of-the-road policies of the League of Women Voters as she had been against the policies of NAWSA, the League's predecessor. After 1920 and the passage of the suffrage amendment, Alice Paul continued to lead the National Women's Party.

The National Women's Party and the Equal Rights Amendment

The National Women's Party (NWP) was dedicated to purely feminist policies, a sweeping demand for total equality under the law—at home, at work, in society. Suffrage had not ended discrimination, they said, and, in fact, it had not. Even as late as the 1920's, many states still carried on the books discriminatory legal statutes (relative to property, inheritance, divorce, jury qualifications, and the like). Alice Paul and the NWP in 1923 drafted an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution to secure in one fell swoop complete equality of the sexes.

Many women's organizations in the 1920's, such as the LWV and GFWC, were opposed to the ERA. They feared it would erase all of the protective legislation for women which had been won so laboriously.

Later, in the 1930's, however, the New Deal legislation requested by President Roosevelt (FDR) gave protection to all workers, men and women alike. This resulted in added support for the ERA. The GFWC, and NFBPW, and other women's organizations eventually endorsed the ERA, but that was not to happen until much later.

Association with Communism

Finally, women's causes suffered because of alleged association with communism. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 scared the country into labeling reform movements "red" or "communistic." Birth control organizations, for instance, were under attack as were lobbies for less restrictive divorce laws. Both were considered anti-American.

Thus, much of the early popular support both from men and from women was gone by the mid 1920's. Enthusiasm for reform and women's rights had dissipated quickly. Many of the women's reform-oriented clubs directed their energies toward non-controversial goals, some went into purely social activities. Most contemporary observers saw the period as one of political conservatism.

Social Climate: 1920-1960

This general turning away from reform reflected a growing change in the temper of the times. The era of the "roaring 20's" had arrived. It was an age of personal freedom and self-concern—not reform. People were preoccupied with the consumption of goods and with making "whoopie"—the unrestrained pursuit of fun.

The vast array of new consumer products excited and absorbed the populace: radios, cars, vacuum cleaners, electric washing machines, refrigerators, stoves, and feature length motion pictures. The age of electricity had arrived and with it a revolution in living.

Women, especially, sensed a new era of emancipation; freedom from restrictions of all kinds. This age of the "flapper" was incisively depicted by John Held, Jr. and his fellow cartoonists in *New Yorker* magazine and other periodicals of the time. Short skirts, high heels, and lipstick replaced the corset and bustle. Temperate behavior was abandoned and women for the first time took to smoking, drinking, and dancing where and when they pleased.

Increased advertising extolled the virtues of the growing clothing and cosmetic industries, directed primarily at women who now became absorbed in shopping and spending the family income.

Tremendous mobility was achieved with the mass production of the automobile. (In 1940, 27 million cars had been sold; in 1960, 61 million.) Sports cars became an obsession, as did movie stars, radio serials (three million radios sold during the 1920's), and the stock market. Synchronized sound was added to silent movies and they became "talkies" in 1927-8.

Young girls rebelled against parental restraint—against fixed hours and established customs of propriety. Divorce arrangements were simplified and taboos against remarriage diminished. The family unit continued to grow smaller. Older relatives lived alone or in nursing homes; there were fewer children per family and they spent more time at school.

A sports craze saw the end of the fragile Victorian ideal as women competed like men in most forms of athletic activity. Political emancipation had given way to personal freedom and a release from yesterday's taboos.

The exuberant twenties led to the difficult thirties—years of worldwide depression, poverty, and strikes. The country was concerned with the plight of the family, not the particular problems of women. Women went to work, when they could, to help out the family—often in part-time jobs.

Growing trouble in Europe and Asia accompanied the depression and led inevitably to World War II in which this country became totally engaged for four years. As more and more men were siphoned out of the civilian labor pool and into the armed forces, one million women left home to join the war effort, donning masculine-type clothing to take on men's work. When Japanese-American families were forcibly evacuated from the west coast to relocation centers, those who wanted to earn money by working at center jobs were allowed to do so. In this way, many Japanese women became paid employees for the first time. Japanese family tradition suffered during the war as homes and communities throughout the west were broken up. The war ended in 1945, leaving the country victorious but emotionally torn.

The late 1940's and 50's again brought a reversal in life style. After the war, many women returned to the home, the family, motherhood, and domesticity. Feminism was reflected in the fashions, and home life was upgraded. With encouragement from the federal government, the birth rate increased, as did the number of marriages. Traditionalism became the vogue. The patriotic wartime picture of "Rosie the Riveter" was out as a national image and the homemaker was in.

Technology

As it had done from colonial times, American technology continued its steady growth during the 20th century. Thus, while only a few people enjoyed the conveniences of major household appliances in 1920, by the 1940's, major advancements in plumbing and electricity were common to most families.

Industry became absorbed in turning the American household into a streamlined assembly line. The home was divided into work areas and traffic patterns with every conceivable appliance possible to save the housewife's time. Catharine Beecher's dream had come true!

Another woman interested in household efficiency was Lillian Gilbreth, a pioneer in the scientific management of a home. She herself had 12 children but was able to combine family responsibilities with a full professional career, thanks, she said, to the efficient management of her own home.

With increased efficiency at home, and increased availability of ready-made clothing and prepared foods outside the home, the liberation of women from household chores seemed to be complete.

Nevertheless, standards of cleanliness, diet, and child-rearing grew more exacting and demanding, so that women did not achieve the total freedom that was expected. Women now spent time thinking about germs, vitamins and minerals, and child psychology.

Television became an important molder of public opinion (three out of five homes had TV sets by 1954). Women were portrayed either as sex objects or as contended housewives. Women who grew discontented with their lot were told by traditionalists to upgrade their role through improved methods of child-rearing and household management.

THE NATION

The population, always growing, moved from 106 million in 1920 to 170 million in 1960. This was in spite of several exclusionary laws, enacted between 1917 and 1924, which restricted almost all immigration. After 1945 these laws were repealed and immigration resumed.

The family automobile and an increasing network of freeways brought about a new trend—suburban living. Beginning around 1945, more space and a quieter life attracted people to the outskirts of the cities. This new trend did not stop increased urbanization, however, which continued steadily. By 1960, 70% of the population lived in the cities, an increase of almost 20% since 1920.

By the 1930's, camping trailers had come into vogue—160,000 had been sold by 1936—and people took to the road all across the country. Motels mushroomed and the national parks filled up at vacation time.

In the office, equipment was completely mechanized as advanced machines replaced older models. The electric calculator and typewriter became standard office equipment in the 1940's. Computers were mass produced in the 1950's. With new machines and the growth of industry, demand for clerical help, including computer operators, increased dramatically.

Working-Class Women and The Labor Movement

Probably the most significant changes between 1920 and 1960 were related to the working-class woman. The first decade was relatively quiet. Wage decrimination against working women continued in all categories. The proportion of women employed in business and industry compared to those working as housewives remained about the same—approximately one in four. (Women now comprised $^1/_5$ of the work force.) Although more women were working outside the home than ever before, the population had increased and the proportion remained constant.

Among working women during the 1920's, immigrant and black women outnumbered native-born white women two to one. In almost all cases, working women were poor people who needed money for a livelihood.

Except for a rapid increase in the number of clerical workers, women continued to work in much the same field as before—domestic, sales, service, and unskilled factory work. A large number of women worked in the garment industries. A few women were hired by the auto, iron, and steel industries.

The Country in Depression

In the early 1930's, following the 1929 collapse of the stock market, the economic situation worsened and a severe economic depression gripped the country and the world, as mentioned earlier. Mass unemployment and hardship followed. During this period there was much criticism of women working and taking jobs away from men (it was thought). Nevertheless they continued to seek employment when they could, often at very low-paying, part-time jobs. Many married women (almost one-third of all women workers) worked to help relieve the family's distressing financial situation.

In 1933, however, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt succeeded Herbert Hoover as president, things began to change. To deal with the crippling depression, Roosevelt instituted a long series of "New Deal" measures.

In many ways, these measures affected women's employment. The National Industrial Recovery Administration Codes (1933) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938) regulated business practices and fixed minimum wages and maximum hours. This was the first national attempt at equalizing men's and women's salaries. Unfortunately, a great number of industries quietly ignored raising the wages of women. Thus, despite the regulatory acts, women's salaries remained low, averaging about half what men were paid for the same work.

Following the inactivity of the 1920's, the 1930's saw a resurgence of union activity for women, except in the garment industry. (By 1920, one half of all women in the garment industry were organized into either of two large unions; they belonged either to the Amalgamated Garment Workers Union or to the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU).) The National Industrial Recovery Act recognized labor's right to organize and the National Labor Relations Board mediated strike disputes, forcing employers to recognize worker's demands. Both of these conditions helped to improve the lot of labor.

Also of help was the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which was extremely effective in bringing women into the labor movement, increasing their membership about 300%, to 800,000 members.

WORLD WAR II

The years of worldwide depression and economic difficulty came to a close with the onset in Europe of World War II in September of 1939. The advent of war launched an unprecedented economic expansion. America's industrial might made her "the arsenal of democracy"—she armed the free world and herself. This, combined with a drastic shortage of manpower, catapulted women into the labor market and the armed forces in ever-increasing numbers. The number of working women jumped 50%, equalling 35% of the work force. Over 250,000 women served in the three branches of the armed forces. Women were employed in fields they had never considered before: chemistry, engineering, heavy manufacturing, transportation, and a host of others.

The large influx of women into labor unions, in combination with the National War Labor Board's policy of equalizing men's and women's pay, increased women's salaries and enlarged their spheres of activities far beyond anything that had previously occurred. Altogether women's roles in the outside world had changed dramatically by 1945, and although there were retrenchments following the war, women's career opportunities have continued to increase and levels of pay and authority to rise steadily during the ensuing years.

In 1950 one out of three women worked (in 1900 one out of five). Half of all married women worked in 1950 and the average age level of women workers had increased. In 1960, 60% of married women were employed, 38% were 45 years or older. Also, for the first time, middle-class educated women entered the work force—not from necessity, but from a desire to leave home and enter the business and professional world.

By 1960 there were almost as many women as men in the work force, but, despite the advances made in World

War II, women still lagged far behind men both in levels of pay and in job responsibility. Women's salaries, for instance, stood at about 60% of men's (with black women remaining the lowest paid group of all). Job categories for women, although varied for a few, followed previous patterns—low-paid and unskilled work (clerical, sales, service, and factory jobs). Still, there had been a decided change in women's lives as the result of World War II.

Professions

Women in the professions during this period fared even worse than those working for wages. More women entered the professions in the 1920's, but their jobs were less prestigious and lower-paid than men's. Seldom did they reach the top. Teaching (through high school level) and nursing were the main professional occupations of women. Some women went on to graduate school but were not employed by universities except in token numbers.

There was an actual decline in the relative position of women doctors and lawyers in that they no longer could count on the patronage of other women as had been possible during the years of the strong women's rights movement. Medical and law schools now admitted women, but always on a very low-quota basis. By 1945, women comprised approximately 5% of total admissions.

The depression years were difficult both for professional women and for working-class women, especially in the teaching and medical professions.

After World War II, this downward trend continued so that by 1960 there were fewer women in the professions than there had been in the 1930's. In colleges and universities there was an equal decline in the percentage of women receiving graduate degrees. The proportion of women faculty members and their salary levels dropped during this 30 year period. In 1930 women held 27% of faculty and professional staff positions, in 1960 only 22%.

As always, a few exceptional women broke through the barriers which exclude the majority: Florence Sabin in the

1920's became a well known scientist and professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins; Ruth Benedict, in the 1940's, was celebrated as the leading anthropologist of her day and was appointed to the faculty at Columbia University; Margaret Mead, brilliant anthropologist, author, and curator of ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History, is well-known and respected by laymen and scientists around the world.

For the first time women entered the musical field as members of orchestras, both as instrumentalists and, in one case, as conductor. Their acceptance in the journalism field also increased. No longer were women journalists limited to reporting on female subjects. Instead, they handled straight news, without reference to sex, in newspapers and on radio and TV. Men still did important news analysis, but they were no longer exclusively in control.

Women in the Arts, the Sports World, Entertainment, etc.

A few outstanding women in the 20's rose to prominence to become national heroines and symbols of the new individualism. Amelia Earhart became an idol overnight for her daring flight across the Atlantic in 1932. Previous to that she had been the first female passenger to cross the Atlantic. Although she did not open the field of aviation for women, she proved at least that women had the ability to fly on an equal basis with men. Mary Pickford, a movie star and a national idol, symbolized the new feminity on the one hand, and the liberated woman on the other.

In literature, Edna St. Vincent Millay expressed through poetry the new liberated life style, while Gertrude Stein in the 1920's led the way to a freer aesthetic expression.

Other writers included Edna Ferber, Pearl Buck, Dorothy Parker, Katherine Anne Porter, and later Gwendolyn Brooks (the first black woman to receive the Pulitzer prize), and many others.

Ruth St. Denis, and later Martha Graham, followed in the footsteps of Isadora Duncan who a decade or two earlier had pioneered a new and liberated style of dance. Marian Anderson, in 1955, became the first black woman to sing with the Metropolitan Opera.

Sportswomen excelled for the first time, competing on an equal basis with men. Helen Wills and Althea Gibson in tennis, Gertrude Ederle in swimming, and "Babe" Diedrickson Zaharias as a great all-around athlete who raised women's golf to levels of national notice.

Business

Opportunities for women were not much greater in business than in the professions except for a few fields devoted to feminine interests such as cosmetics, women's magazines, and fashion. Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden were examples of women who reached the top in the cosmetic industry.

Men continued to make the important decisions in the economy—industry, banks, and other financial institutions. Women remained by and large at the bottom of the corporate ladder.

Politics

After 1920 women were legally qualified to hold public office—either appointed or elected. Few, however, did so. Most of the women who held office had either been aided by their husbands or assumed a husband's position after his death.

Eleanor Roosevelt was an outstanding exception. In 1921, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR), her husband and the future president of the United States, suffered a crippling attack of polio. From that moment on, she became his main support; he relied on her for political advice, campaign assistance, and, for guidance in general. Overcoming personal shyness and a difficult voice, Mrs. Roosevelt immersed herself in politics, social reform, and concern over women's place in government.

Of the foregoing activities, it was the last for which she worked the hardest. She poured her talent and energy into seeing that women achieved status and position in government and in public service jobs. In this she was highly successful; through her effort, thousands of women were employed by various branches of the federal government.

A few women were appointed by Franklin Roosevelt to high level positions. The most noted was Frances Perkins who joined the Roosevelt cabinet as secretary of labor. Her outstanding performance together with that of a few other capable women demonstrated the political competence and increased the stature of women during the Roosevelt administration. Other prominent women in the Roosevelt era included Rose Schneiderman, Mary Dewson, and Mary McLeod Bethune.

Rose Schneiderman, an immigrant from Poland, was the best known American woman trade unionist of this period. As president of the National Women's Trade Union League for many years, she wielded great power. Later, in the 1930's she held a position in President Roosevelt's New Deal administration and was a member of his "Brain Trust."

Equally powerful, Mary Dewson worked within the Democratic party, having been appointed head of the women's division by FDR, and eventually (1936) achieved equal representation for women on the platform committee.

Mary McLeod Bethune (1875-1955), famous American black educator, established her own school for Negro girls, the Bethune-Cookman College. Later she entered a long useful life in public affairs. In 1935, she founded the National Council of Negro Women to coordinate the activities of black women's organizations. Today there are almost a million members. She later became a special advisor on Negro affairs to President Roosevelt and, in 1945, consultant to the United Nations organizational conference. She came to be a symbol of pride and accomplishment to her race.

Unfortunately this trend did not continue after Roosevelt's death although a few women were elected to Congress from time to time. By 1960 significantly fewer women were in government service than there had been during the days of Roosevelt's administration.

In politics, women reverted to the role of fund raiser while men were elected governors, mayors, congressmen, and state legislators. Oveta Culp Hobby was the exception in the 1950's; she was appointed by President Eisenhower as his Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

As the American people prospered in the years after World War II—absorbed in growing wealth and the amassing of ever greater numbers of possessions, there were some groups in that society which were largely excluded. These were the minorities.

Discriminated against socially, economically, and politically, minority peoples remained mired in poverty and unemployment. As time went on the black people especially became increasingly desperate.

A revolt against these conditions began in 1954 when the Supreme Court made a landmark decision relative to segregation in schools. "Separate but equal" education, they said, was unconstitutional. The civil rights movements of the 1950's began with this decision. Separate but equal, the Supreme Court said, usually resulted in unequal education.

A year later Rosa Parks began a drive for desegregation of buses in Montgomery, Alabama. The movement spread to lunch counters and voter registration. In a very short time the third largest reform movement in the history of this country was in full swing. This reform movement was to have a startling effect on women just as the two previous reform movements had had in their times—the antislavery movement before the Civil War, and the social reforms of the Progressive Era.

Summary

To summarize this forty-year period, three events stand out as dramatically affecting women's lives. The first was the increased involvement of women in the labor movement; the second, the unprecendented opening up of employment opportunities during World War II; and the third, the growing interest in the Equal Rights Amendment.

With the depression and the World War II absorbing most of the nation's energy, women's rights and other social reform movements lay largely dormant during this period. They did not, however, grind to a halt and, beginning in the mid-60's, there was a strong resurgence of the feminist movement.

AMERICAN WOMEN; 1607 TO THE PRESENT

by Polly Zane and John Zane

BOOKLET 6: 1960's and 1970's

A Time of Growing Dissent; Emergence of New Feminism

The Proof Press
Berkeley, California

On the cover, the top portrait shows Dolores Huerta (1930-), on the left, and Chien-Shiung Wu (1912-); the lower portrait is of Betty Friedan (1921-). These pencil studies are by John Zane.

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Introduction

The depression of the 30's was followed by the global conflict of World War II. The horrors of the war ended with the signing of the peace treaties. Somewhat to its surprise, the United States emerged from the war to find itself transformed to the world's super-power engulfed in a wave of prosperity.

As with all periods of prosperity, however, there were some people who were excluded—who suffered poverty amidst plenty. This was true in the 1950's for a great many people, but especially for the black people. Almost a century after the abolition of slavery, the blacks still faced insurmountable social and economic handicaps. This situation and other ills of the nation brought on America's third great period of reform.

Social Reform

The reform era of the late 1950's and early 1960's at first focused on the economically and socially oppressed black Americans. In 1955, Rosa Parks had led off the great Civil Rights Movement of the South in Montgomery, Alabama, by refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man. A bus boycott followed and, with it, the beginning of a long fight for integration of transportation and education led by blacks and sympathetic white people.

There were many other reforms in the 60's and 70's: the fight against crime, poverty, drug abuse, and juvenile delinquency; help for the American Indian, Puerto Ricans, and Mexican Americans.

The largest issue—one that gripped the entire nation—was the war in Vietnam. Young people took up the fight for peace and in doing so brought about a strong new radicalism. Calls for disarmament and cessation of nuclear testing were heard across the country.

A "new left" developed on college and university campuses. The peace and freedom movement called for an end to war in Vietnam. Anti-war demonstrations and sit-ins resulted in the arrest of many students.

Discontent was neither isolated geographically nor limited to any single ethnic or special interest group. People across the nation—old and young, men and women, black and white—took active part in peace marches, anti-draft movements, consumer strikes, and numerous other public displays of concern.

As the reform period progressed, young women, eager to put their total energies into the movement, found that the pattern of former years was repeating itself.

As in the past they encountered discrimination in the very reform organizations they wanted so much to work for. Their activities were limited by their male counterparts to positions of insignificance—clerical work—fund-raising, etc. Positions of leadership and responsibility were male dominated. This feeling of inequality touched off the great feminist (women's rights) movement of the 60's and 70's.

Women's Rights

Indignant at their treatment in the reform movements of the 60's, many women finally determined to put an end to sex discrimination. Women's political and labor organizations pressured President Kennedy to take action opposing discrimination against women in all aspects of society. Eleanor Roosevelt was also influential in bringing pressure on the President.

In 1960, President Kennedy responded to women's demands by creating a task force to study their status in society. It was called the President's Commission on the Status of Women. In 1963, the report from the Commission was published. Called *American Women*, its startling results showed that women suffered the same injustices as were suffered by minority groups.

After the study of the President's Commission, other national studies were conducted for the same purpose—to determine where women stood economically and socially in relation to men.

On the positive side, three pieces of federal legislation were passed in the 1960's which were of great help to minority groups, but which proved of some benefit to women also.

- 1963. *The Equal Pay Act* forbade unequal pay because of sex differences in industries engaged in interstate commerce.
- 1964. *The Civil Rights Act* made sex discrimination unlawful in employment practices of any kind, not just wages; the act was to be enforced by an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).
- 1967. *Executive Order 11246* forbade racial, sexual, or religious discrimination by the Federal Government and its contractors and subcontractors.

In spite of the optimism that these federal acts created, guidelines proved inadequate and many loopholes existed. The federal government seemed uninterested in strengthening the acts or in enforcing them.

A New Feminist Movement

In the late 1960's several factors combined to trigger a new burst of feminist feeling.

- Women had met with discriminatory experiences in the civil rights and peace movements.
- The findings of the President's Commission had shown widespread discrimination and prejudice against women.
- A rash of new feminist writings was published; they disclosed unequal treatment of women throughout American history.
- The federal acts of the 60's had proved disappointing.

Of all the material published at this time, it was Betty Friedan's book that most aroused women's indignation and forced them to question their part in society. "Is motherhood and domesticity really the most satisfying role for women?" *The Feminine Mystique,* published in 1963, ignited the women's rights movement in this country as had no other single event.

This movement drew its members largely from middle-class urban women, although small college towns and some lower-middle class women had entered the movement by the end of the decade. In the 60's there was also a division of women as far as age and political outlook were concerned. There were two main groupings. One was comprised of older, more conservative members who labeled their cause the Women's Rights Movement. The other group, with a younger, more radical membership, was a movement for "women's liberation," as announced in Chicago in 1968. This second group had grown from the campuses' peace and freedom movements and was composed mostly of young unmarried women. The women's liberation groups were very small and unstructured without strong leadership, whereas the women's rights groups were large and better disciplined.

As time went on, however, the two centers tended to focus on the same issues so that by 1966 both radical and conservative women—impatient at the delay of the federal government in taking action against discriminatory treatment of women—got together in Washington, DC. They determined to form an organization to take action in the same way that civil rights organizations had done. Thus, the National Organization for Women (NOW) was formed in 1966—shaped in large part by Betty Friedan..

NOW grew rapidly. By 1974 there were over 48,000 members. But it was only one amongst many feminist organizations that developed during the 60's and 70's. In 1966 NOW issued a simple statement of goals: "To bring women into the mainstream of society through equal rights in employment and education." NOW insists that the present educational system teaches women to aim only for women-type jobs. From elementary school through graduate school, it has been assumed that motherhood is the primary vocation of women. Numberless social conventions reinforce this assumption and contribute to women's traditional self-expectations: language, the communications media (which emphasizes sex appeal and homemaking), segregation in clubs, unequal educational quotas in professional schools, religious history, and on and on.

Smaller and more conservative than NOW, the Women's Equal Action League (WEAL), was formed in 1968. WEAL concentrated on improving the economic and employment status of women through court action and legislative means. Its membership was composed mostly of academic and professional women. Both NOW and WEAL have continued throughout the 60's and 70's to be extremely influential feminist organizations, although many others emerged during the 70's and successfully helped women in their movement to gain equality.

Amongst these newly emerged organizations, the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) is probably the most well known. Founded in 1971, the Caucus helps women to gain political power through active participation in the political system. Among the original founders are: Betty Friedan, Bella Abzug, Shirley Chisholm, and Gloria Steinem—all active today in the feminist cause.

Women are also publishing journals, magazines, and newsletters relating to purely feminist subjects. *The Feminist Press,* for instance, represents women in print media; it publishes a large number of women's writings. Other publications include: *Ms. Magazine, Women's Work, Women Today,* and *Media Report to Women.*

New Demands by Women

As the fight against sex discrimination continues into the 1970's, the goals of women's organizations have expanded to include many new objectives. A great many specific reforms have been defined. First and foremost of these objectives (although not new) is an end of job discrimination, and, in conjunction with this reform, a change in educational curriculum and class definition.

Further objectives include: funds for day care centers; free abortions for poor women; equity in party politics and religious institutions; elimination of sex as a base of eligibility in credit card and charge account practices, and in mortgaging of homes; programs for union women; better treatment of women on welfare, in prisons, and in hospitals; equity in sports. New emphasis has been placed on treatment of minorities, the poor, and working-class women.

The more radical feminists, not unlike those earlier women in the first wave of feminism, are demanding changes in total spheres of activity. They challenge the social system, with its tradition of marriage and family, which they believe places women in dependent and inferior positions.

Feminist Gains in the 70's.

Feminist organizations feel that a certain amount of progress has been made in the 70's. Some of the most important advances are the following:

- Guidelines for the three federal acts passed in the 60's have been revised and extended to give working women more protection and equal pay for equal jobs. This improvement was largely due to pressures exerted by women's organizations. Federal contractors are now required to follow affirmative action mandates to correct discriminatory practices. This applies to colleges and universities who receive aid from the federal government. "Help wanted" advertising that discriminates against women has been forbidden. WEAL has brought suit against hundreds of industries for non-compliance in these matters. Millions of dollars in back pay has been collected through a new Equal Employment Opportunities Act (1972) which extends the coverage for women.
- In 1971, Congress passed health care legislation which included women.
- The Education Act of 1972, Title IX, prohibits discrimination against students or employees by colleges and universities on a basis of sex. Equal facilities and financ-

ing must be made available to students of both sexes.

- In 1973, the Supreme Court legalized abortion in all states.
- Also in 1973, both houses of Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment, just 50 years after Alice Paul had first introduced ERA to Congress, and it went to the states for ratification. Thirty states ratified immediately: "Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex." To date, 35 states have ratified the ERA; three more are needed by late 1979 if ERA is to be the law of the land. Supporters are now suggesting an extension of the 1979 date.
- The United Nations established International Women's Year in 1975. The conference was held in Mexico City; the Women's Action Alliance drew up a National Women's Agenda, which was presented and signed by over 90 women's organizations. It was a statement of major concerns and objectives for women during the coming years.
- In November, 1977, a National Women's Conference was convened in Houston, Texas—the first national women's conference to be held since the historic Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, and the first to be funded by the federal government. As a symbol of this momentous occasion, a torch was carried in relay fashion the 2610 miles from Seneca Falls to Houston. On the last leg of the journey, the torch was carried by Billie Jean King.

The Houston Conference of 1977

The National Women's Conference was established to examine the concerns of women and to make recommendations to the President and Congress. An appropriation of $5 billion was approved for the Conference which was attended by 2,000 delegates as well as many thousands of onlookers. The majority, approximately 80%, favored passage of the 26 issues which had been compiled for discussion. Most of these women were members of ERAmerica, a national coalition of 130 groups dedicated to the passage of the 27th Amendment, the Equal Rights Amendment.

Approximately 20% of the delegates represented a coalition of anti-feminists, calling themselves Pro-America and led by Phyllis Schlafly.

When the Conference closed, 25 of the 26 resolutions had passed. These ranged from the endorsement of the ERA to enforcement of the Equal Credit Act to recognition of the problems of minority women. Feminist leaders such as Bella Abzug (presiding officer of the conference), Liz Carpenter (co-founder of ERAmerica), Gloria Steinam, Betty Friedan, Coretta King (active leader of black movements and widow of Martin Luther King), Midge Costanza (presidential assistant), Margaret Mead (anthropologist), Rosilyn Carter, former first ladies Betty Ford and Ladybird Johnson, and Susan B. Anthony (whose great-aunt was the leading suffragist for 50 years and who led the women's rights movement with Elizabeth Cady Stanton)—all were there working toward passage of the resolutions. These resolutions, called a National Plan of Action, have now gone to President Carter and Congress for consideration.

Minority Women

In a compact study such as this, there is not enough room to follow the historic trail of the many ethnic minorities in this country. Yet minority women are important to this study in that the priorities and interests of each group of women are very different, not only from white native-born women, but from each other. These women face double discrimination—both as women and as members of ethnic minorities.

The problems of blacks, or Afro-Americans, are discussed throughout these booklets, beginning with the slave trade, then the abolitionist movement and help toward freedom, followed by women's organizations and reform associations, and finally participation in the civil rights movements of the past two or three decades.

Black people comprise 11% of the population; their income level is 64% that of whites, with black women earning much less than black men.

In attempting to cope with their singularly difficult role in society, black women have formed two new organizations. One is the Black Women Organized for Action, whose concerns cover not only women but the entire black community. The other, the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO), is the first truly feminist black organization—one that is concerned with black women as women rather than as members of a race. The NBFO concerns itself with the employment needs of black women, especially that large percentage of black women who are heads of families—a much higher percentage among blacks than among whites.

The second largest minority group in the United States is comprised of the Mexican Americans, or Chicano peoples, as some of them prefer to be called. The history of these people begins as part of this country with the Mexican War, in 1846, and Mexico's agreement to cede lands between Texas and California to the United States. By 1900, so many native born white people had moved into these southwestern states, that very soon the Mexicans were outnumbered. The latter gradually lost their property, and, in time, the majority became landless, semi-skilled laborers doing temporary and seasonal work: railroad construction, cotton picking, and later, work as field hands in the large vegetable and fruit farms of the southwest. After World War II, many Mexican-Americans moved to such large cities as Los Angeles and El Paso and became factory workers.

During these years Chicanas (Mexican-American women) worked alongside their husbands in the fields and factories. Their wages were even lower than their husbands' which, at best, were only 70% of what the normal wage was for comparable work. The low wages were in part attributable to the lack of a good education, especially in the case of Chicanas, who were fortunate if they remained in school long enough to reach the eighth grade.

Although some union activity on behalf of agricultural workers had occurred as long ago as the turn of the century, it had little impact until the 1920's and 30's. Strikes were called often amongst the farm workers and many women joined the movement. One of the largest strikes was against 130 pecan processing plants; it was led by Emma Tenayucca, in 1938. More recently, Dolores Huerta, working with Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers, has become one of the strongest labor union leaders in Mexican-American history.

Dolores Huerta and Emma Tenayucca, however, are exceptions insofar as leadership is concerned. Although Mexican-American women have joined the labor movement, they have generally taken second palce. In a culture that is male-dominated, women's efforts are considered secondary and inferior, not only in the labor movement but at home and in society. Chicanas have but recently begun to react to this situation.

After the civil rights movement of the 1960's and 70's, Chicanas, in sympathy with the feminist movement, demanded equality of position in their own culture. The first national conference of Chicanas was held in 1971. Several feminist organizations were formed as part of the Mexican-American culture; the most well-known is the Chicana Caucus, a part of El Partido de la Raza (the Party of the United People).

Another minority group is comprised of white urban ethnic peoples, generally from Southeast Europe. At first it was thought that these and other diverse cultures would soon blend into one overall American culture as part of the melting pot concept. However, this has not turned out to be true. Many of these cultures have not only found it difficult to integrate into the Anglo-Saxon community, they have, in addition, wanted to retain their own traditional background. More and more Americans seem to have come to accept the concept of cultural pluralism —that peoples of different backgrounds can exist side by side in harmony. The Congress of Neighborhood Women was formed to help ethnic minority women with these problems.

Asian-Americans, of Japanese and Chinese stock, have had their difficult times in the history of this country, as described elsewhere in this study unit. It has been especially hard for Asian women to adjust to a culture so unlike their own. Nevertheless, the Japanese and Chinese, more than all other minorities, have been better able to provide for themselves. Their educational and employment levels even surpass those of Caucasians. Asian women, though slow to break out of their traditional womanly role, are doing so in increasing numbers. Pat Sumi, for instance, a Japanese-American, is on the staff at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu, a Chinese-American, is a highly respected nuclear physicist at Columbia University. Some are involved in political activity; many are receiving education for future jobs in the professions.

Other minorities include Filipinos, Koreans, and East Indian immigrants, who along with the Chinese and Japanese, exceeded in numbers all other immigrants in 1968. This was after the new policy of open immigration was legislated by Congress. Integration into American culture, so unlike their own, however, has not been easy, and preoccupation with this part of life has precluded any strong feminist movement. However, even these women are finding new occupations outside the home, and breaking with the traditional domestic role.

Women from still other minorities have founded feminist organizations: the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, the Catholic Women for ERA, and the Jewish Feminist Organization.

The feminist movement, which began with middle-class, native-born white women, is spreading to all American women, regardless of race, creed, or origin.

Working Class Women and the Labor Movement

Many people consider the flood of women into jobs as the most significant social event of the century.

During the 1960's and 70's the rate at which women entered the labor market continued to accelerate. It seems likely that by 1980 women will comprise more than 40% of America's labor force. Nearly half of all women of working age in this country are now either employed or seeking employment.

Women on the Move: Where are They Going?

It is significant that a growing number of older married women are seeking employment after their children are raised.

What impels so many women to enter the labor market? The most obvious reason is the changing social pattern of the 20th century—smaller families, more divorces, more women who elect to remain single, changing attitudes about women working, and, probably the most important, the economic necessity to earn money. Not only do many women support themselves, and sometimes their children, but (with rising inflation) a large proportion of men can no longer support a family on just their own earnings. For many families two incomes are essential.

Where are the women going in the 70's? What jobs are they finding? What are they being paid?

To start with, women are now represented in almost all job classifications: police officers, bank tellers, computer operators, telephone repairwomen, coal miners, stock brokers, health administrators, bus drivers, dentists, and so on, and on.

Most women (approximately 40% of all working women), however, still wind up in some form of "service" job. The top eight job classifications for women include nearly half of all women workers; these job classifications are: secretaries, food-service workers, teachers (except college), sales-clerks and related workers, bookkeepers, personal-service workers (including hairdressers), cashiers, and typists.

Job classifications seem to be stereotyped according to sex. As examples: men are doctors, women—nurses; men are executives, women—secretaries; men are pilots, women—stewardesses; etc. This occupational segregation is responsible for much of the wage differential that exists. The gap between male and female wages is not narrowing. On the contrary, it continues to widen, which may be due to the ever-growing number of minority women entering the labor market in the very unskilled, low-paying classifications.

In 1974, the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) was formed to organize non-union women and to improve working conditions. Only about 10% of all of the women in the work force are not organized, however.

On the brighter side, the stereotype of sex as a factor in job eligibility is cracking. The blue collar trades are enticing women away from the office and into the factory or onto the assembly line. Pay is a great deal higher in the blue collar trades, most of which are unionized. For women with no advanced education and low career goals, blue collar work is a better bet than white collar work. Because of the large number of women entering blue collar work, a shortage of secretaries has occurred.

The three federal enactments of the 1960's and the guidelines and revisions amended to them in the early 70's (see Women's Rights section) have done much to help women gain equal pay in those areas where the enactments apply—interstate commerce, federal and state employment and contractors and subcontractors to federal and state agencies. In addition, the Supreme Court ruled, in 1971, that unequal treatment based on sex alone violates the 14th amendment.

The Military

Since World War II, America's armed forces have offered career opportunities to women. Total personnel in the armed forces now numbers about two million; of these about 90,000 are women. Women may enter all job categories except direct combat positions. Although they are seldom in top level positions, they do reach officer status in all branches. The air force, army, and naval academies are now accepting women for training.

Business

Although few women in the past have made it to the top in the business world, more and more do so nowadays. Women are more successful in the newer fields (communications, computer sciences, etc), than in the traditional basic industries; many reach junior executive positions with staffs of two or three or more. On the other hand, men may realistically aspire to positions at all executive levels, including president and board chairman.

While women make up nearly 40% of the total labor force, they can only claim 2.3% of the salaries over $25,000.

Change is in the wind, however, in that an increasing number of women are entering business schools, obtaining degrees from good colleges and universities, and finding some measure of success in the business world.

Many women are opening their own small businesses in order to improve their economic status—printing shops, legal firms, dress shops, food service, bookshops, and the like. In spite of the mortality rate of small businesses, this approach to a career has been gratifying to quite a few.

More and more women are to be found at business conferences and professional business meetings. Twenty-one percent of the country's corporations now have women sitting on their boards of directors. Nevertheless, in all business activities, it is necessary for women to work twice as hard as men for an equal degree of success, and they are likely to encounter some form of sexual prejudice along the way.

A handful of exceptional women have achieved outstanding careers: Mary Wells Lawrence, board chairman of one of the most successful advertising firms in New York, which she co-founded; Marion Kellogg, Vice-President at General Electric; and so on. But there are so few of such women that they serve more as inspiration to others than as examples of significant trends.

Professions

Close to 20% of working women are in professional fields. Although teaching (except college) and nursing still predominate, some progress is being made in other fields. More and more women are entering medical and law schools—in 1975, 25% of entering medical students and 20% of the law students were women. Not all of these women are successful practitioners, but some succeed because, in this age of great feminist interest, an increasing number of women are anxious to use female doctors and lawyers.

Nonetheless, the proportion of women to men in traditional professional fields is not large. In 1970, 7% of the doctors were women, 2% of the dentists, 3.5% of the lawyers, 1% of the engineers, and 11% of the natural scientists. In addition, the trend is toward even smaller proportions. For instance, in 1960, women made up 27% of the faculty and professional staff of our colleges and universities. In 1970, the figure was only 22%.

There are some fields which hold promise for women. Women predominate in the health services, mostly as nurses and technicians; other women are editors, journalists, librarians, real estate brokers, newscasters, key punch and computer operators.

In the ministry, progress is either non-existent or slow, especially in the Catholic and Protestant Episcopal Churches. Some success has been achieved in the other protestant churches where a few women have been ordained and received in the ministry.

Education

The former trend toward higher education for women seems to be waning. In 1977 there were proportionately fewer women graduates from college, fewer who received masters degrees, and fewer who received Ph.D. degrees than there had been ten years earlier. On the positive side, a Federal Education Act was passed in 1972; it prohibits discrimination against students by colleges and universities on a basis of sex. In addition, Rhodes Scholarships are now, for the first time, offered to women as well as to men.

Politics

Beginning with Frances Perkins (Secretary of Labor under Franklin Delano Roosevelt), only a handful of women have served as Cabinet members; Oveta Culp Hobby under Eisenhower, Carla Hill under Ford. Now, President Carter has named two, Patricia Harris as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and Juanita Kreps as Secretary of Commerce.

In other political areas, only 5% of elected officials are women (on a local scale, 10 to 12% , nationally, 2%). Very few members of Congress are women (approximately 2%), and the nubmers are not growing. There is only a handful of governors who are women.

The Women's Political Caucus has been active and has accomplished a great deal in helping women to gain access to positions in the political world. One example: pressure by the Caucus has resulted in the equal seating (with men) on the governing committees of both political parties. Still another: in conjunction with NOW and other women's organizations, a conference boycott has been imposed on states which have not ratified the ERA. Many states are feeling the economic pressure of lost convention business.

Still and all, the representation of women in politics remains negligible. Seventeen women are U.S. representatives, none are senators. No woman has yet been elected president, although a few, such as Shirley Chisholm, the first black Congresswoman, have made unsuccessful bids for that post.

Homelife and the Social Structure

In the 1960's and 70's, the patterns of society have been shifting. The stable lifelong marriage is no longer the only acceptable lifestyle. Multiple marriages are becoming commonplace, and the proportion of marriageable women who remain single has risen from 25% in 1950 to 40% in 1975.

More and more women are becoming heads of households; in 1975, 13% of all families were headed by women. This role is not always an easy one; discrimination against women exists not only in employment practices, but in the fundamentals of the social structure as well. Bank loans are hard to obtain, as are insurance policies and credit, and adequate social security payments and pension plans are often illusory. As heads of households—with children to support—women find it hard to meet expenses on salaries averaging 60% of male salaries (and less for members of minorities). More and more women who are heads of households are falling into the impoverished category. Except for Asian-Americans, there are far more minorities than whites who exist below the poverty level.

Whether married or single, whether heads of households or not, the average American woman is employed at some time in her life. Household chores are shared by men and women in many families—especially those of the present generation. A combination of household and cooking appliances with processed, heat-and-serve foods has vastly simplified and lightened domestic responsibility. The number of meals eaten at restaurants is rising dramatically. Even at home, frozen foods bring meals to the table within a few minutes.

Two- or three-car families are now common as are two televisions per family. Motorcycles, pop concerts, and stereos provide entertainment for the younger generation. Reading ability is down and crime rates are up.

In all of these areas, young women share equally with young men. Today, most women must look to themselves for financial support during their lifetimes. Thus they must prepare, with adequate education, for a vocation which will provide them a livelihood equal to a man's.

This is a drastic change from what feminists envisioned a century or so earlier. Women then were willing to shoulder the double burden of running a house while holding an outside job. Nothing is static, however. Even as this is written, reaction and backlash against the feminist movement have begun to arise across the country by women as well as men. Only time will tell which direction the feminist movement will take.

Summary

Many factors account for women's slow rise in spheres of activity outside the home, whether as working class women, professionals, business women, or as politicans.

Women, themselves, do not readily assume leadership nor do they easily abandon the traditional role of mother and housewife.

Day care centers for children are still not prevalent and the cost is high. President Nixon set the program back when he vetoed a Day Care Bill in 1972. Since then funds have been hard to come by and probably will continue to be scarce.

Male cultural patterns exclude women and tend to stereotype jobs by sex which automatically denigrates women's abilities.

At present women are working to correct the stereotyping that depicts them as creatures who are economically dependent, inferior, and subject to the whims of a male-oriented society.

This stereotyping, women contend, begins in childhood and continues through adulthood. In particular, women find the stereotyping of jobs to be offensive and limiting. Social equality, women feel, stems from economic equality.

To this end, women fight for a change in the sex classification of jobs, for increased child care, especially for children in early years, and for the freedom not to have children if they prefer not to.

Women are also challenging the structure of home life and the family pattern. Many feel that household tasks should be shared when both men and women work—an increasing necessity in an inflated economy.

To date, only a few of these goals have been attained. But the changes which have been made are sufficient to lead one to anticipate a great many more during the last quarter of this century.

Instructional Guide to:

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Polly Zane and John Zane

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ADDENDA AND ERRATA for AMERICAN WOMEN; 1607 TO THE PRESENT

In the Instructional Guide:

.on p. 3, add the names Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman to the listing of women pictured in the set of portrait prints.
.on p. 5, in the first paragraph under the heading Dividing Subject Matter etc., the 7th line should begin with the word on.
.on p. 7, the 2nd line of item 8 should begin with the phrase during the first half of the 19th century.
.on p. 10, the 1st line of item 10 should end with the word preceded.
.on p. 12, the next to the last word in the left-hand column should be ostracized and the 8th word from the top of the right-hand column should be renown.
.on p. 15, in the right-hand column, the 3rd word should be reminiscences and the 12th word should be ostracized.

In Booklet 2: 1830-1860:

.on p. 7, the 5th line from the bottom should have deleted from it (mentioned in Booklet 1); in the last line, renown (not reknown).

In Booklet 3: 1860-1890:

.on p. 13, line 4, ostracized (not ostrasized).

In Booklet 4: 1890-1920:

.Concerning women's political status and suffrage (pp. 12-13, 19), while the 19th amendment assured all women the right to vote, many states had already granted this privilege. Because Montana had done so in 1914, it became possible for Jeannette Rankin to run for office prior to passage of the 19th.

In Booklet 5: 1920-1960:

.on p. 5, line 16, on (not one).
.on p. 6 under the heading Trouble Within etc., line 4, change has to had.
.on p. 11 under the heading Working-Class Women etc., line 3, discrimination (not decrimination), and line 17, fields (not field).
.on p. 12, line 23, especially (not except).

In Booklet 6: 1960's and 1970's:

.on p. 9 under the heading The Houston Conference of 1977, line 4, change billion to million.
.on p. 12, line 12, change palce to place.
.on p. 15, line 7, delete not.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIT AND ITS COMPONENT PARTS

This study unit traces the uneven growth of women's changing roles in America. The unit examines women's advances as influenced by historical events, major social trends, and technological advancements. The role of ethnic minorities is stressed throughout the unit.

The four parts of the unit are:

1. Six student booklets. Each booklet represents one chronological period. Historical background is given and women's roles are presented in such spheres of activity as home life--legal rights--education; professions--business--sports; working class women and the labor movement; social reform; women's rights--politics. 6" x 9", 110 pages total (approx.).

2. A set of twelve portrait prints representing major aspects of American women's growth. Prints are correlated with the six booklets; they are printed on heavy paper, 10" x 13", and may be used as study prints or for display during a unit on women's history. Pictured in warm duo-tone are:

   Pocahontas
   Susan B. Anthony and
   Elizabeth Cady Stanton
   Jane Addams
   Mary McLeod Bethune
   Dolores Huerta and
   Chien-Shiung Wu
   Abigail Adams
   Elizabeth Blackwell
   "Mother" Jones
   Margaret Sanger
   Alice Paul
   Betty Friedan

3. A chronological chart gives a compilation of all major facts from the booklets, shows women's changing roles throughout American history. Easy comparison of women's spheres of activity with the passage of time. 11 1/2" x 35". 805 facts are given.

4. An instructional guide for teachers includes an introduction to the unit, study plans for each chronological period, and a windup and summary with discussion and essay questions, and a bibliography. Vocabulary is stressed. 8 1/2" x 11", approximately 32 pages.

The study unit comes packaged in a resealable 12" x 15" vinyl envelope.

Price: $32.00

Introduction

The information in this study unit on American Women has been difficult to find and more difficult still to piece together. Although the history of women's brave, imaginative, and dedicated struggle to reach goals they believed in is nearly 400 years old, this history is still too new as a field of study to be very well organized. Generally, the necessary facts cannot be found in school textbooks, history books, encyclopedias, or other reference materials. We have had to put the story together a piece at a time, like a large and somewhat stubborn jigsaw puzzle. The sources are varied--some biographical, others autobiographical, still others such unusual collections as the Schlesinger Library's Notable American Women, and some more recent works written by the women themselves.

We have intended this study unit to be a straightforward and comprehensive story of women's changing roles as traced through specific spheres of activity. Socio-economic forces, technology, wars, depressions, industrial growth--these and a thousand other influences have had their impact on the lives and aspirations of American women. This rich background is carefully but succinctly recorded in our narrative, both in the six booklets and in the chart.

Our attempt has been to fit the entire pattern together--to see where, when, why, and how women's roles have changed throughout this country's history.

Scope

In a compact survey of this kind it is of course impossible to include all of those women who have had an effect on the country and on the women's movement. The portraits, for instance, arbitrarily include only fifteen out of hundreds who might as easily have been chosen to represent their particular fields or time. In actual fact, we have been more interested in the spheres of activity open to the great majority of women than in strictly biographical sketches of a few. The impact of strong personalities over the course of history cannot be denied, however, and so our study includes a number of individual women. But we have presented them in terms of the changes they effected rather than for any highly personal accomplishments. Forceful leaders in the professions, labor or reform movements, for instance, have been given preference over equally accomplished women in the arts--primarily because the former influenced women's changing roles to a far greater extent than the latter.

In that we have limited the amount of biographical material in our booklets, we encourage interested students to do their own biographical research (as suggested in the study plans of the instructional guide).

Dividing Subject Matter into Categories or Spheres of Activity

Because dividing subject matter into categories makes it easier to study and discuss, we have presented our material under a number of convenient headings both in the booklets and in the chronological chart. But students should be aware that such divisions are largely arbitrary and that categories tend to merge into one another. As often as not, a given activity might fit equally well into several categories, and where it is placed depends one what the author is trying to say or to emphasize. Also, a category may contain seemingly different kinds of entries. For example, under "education" there might be listed women's access to the first elementary and secondary schools, or women's entrance into higher education, or their admission to teacher training or other professional schools.

Writing is equally difficult to categorize. Is it an art or a profession? Women have become editors and publishers; they have written for pulp magazines; they have appealed to a mass market with sentimental and romantic fiction; others, like Emily Dickinson, stand out as great literary figures. Eventually, we decided to include all writing and other art forms in the professions category as most women in these fields seem to have been at least partially motivated by the desire to make money.

Women themselves also do not fall naturally into one classification to the exclusion of others. Professional women may work for reform movements; women who labor for an hourly wage may go into politics. And so on. Thus Elizabeth Cady Stanton is noted on our chart as being active in the Women's Rights Movement. However, she was also involved in the cause of abolition, dress reform, temperance, etc. Many other women followed her pattern.

Common Theme

An ironic recurrence through the history of women's emerging roles is worth mentioning and should be studied carefully by students. This is the repeated disillusionment of women who wholeheartedly participated in a reform movement only to find themselves the victims of the very kind of treatment they were trying to correct. This has led time and again to strong surges in feminist drives. Three such periods of reform and resultant feminist drives have occurred. The first reform movement was involved with the abolition of slavery; the second occurred during the Progressive Era, and the third was the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's.

The Women's Rights Movement

Women's rights, as a sphere of activity, has been placed in a category of its own even though, in actual fact, it is a reform movement and might be placed with other social reforms. The term "women's rights" is equated with the term "feminism", meaning women's social, economic, and political equality with men. There are many more terms for the same thing; in an attempt to avoid the confusion of referring to the same subject in many different ways in a short work like this, we have used the term "women's rights" in most instances.

Historical Perspective

The student is asked to look at historical events through the eyes of the society in which they occurred. It is hard for us in the present time when everyone can vote to imagine how steadfastly so many women worked--for over 70 years--to achieve the vote, and what it meant to them to be denied suffrage. It is equally hard to imagine a time when it was improper for women to speak in public. But such was the case, and it took much courage to thwart these and similar conventions. In doing so, many women were jailed, some few even had their property destroyed, and all found themselves subjected to ridicule and denunciation.

Not a Mass Movement

Scanning the entire 370-year period, it would seem that the desire for change on the part of women has been more than the attainment of such specific goals as education, access to professions, suffrage, and the like. It has been achieving the right to make autonomous choices and to determine one's own future according to one's abilities and desires. How far women are from achieving this and how many wish to do so is hard to determine.

BOOKLET 1 1607-1830

Discussion or Essay Questions

1. English law and custom quite naturally governed the English Colonies in America, yet the lives of American women were very different from those of their sisters in England. In what way did they differ?
2. Many people believe that English colonial law locked women into inferior and subservient positions. Do you agree? If so, do you think English laws were part of the cause? Can you explain why you think so?
3. Colonial Americans worked from sunrise to sunset. How did the women spend their time?
4. Describe the way clothing was made during the colonial period.
5. What sort of education did girls receive? How did it compare with boys'? How had it changed by 1830?
6. Discuss women's work in the trade and "cottage" industries.
7. The lives of American women began to change after the American Revolution. Can you explain why?
8. Westward migration was in full swing after the Revolutionary War and during the first half of the 18th century. How do you think the lives of these pioneering women differed from those of women in the older settlements?
9. Why did farm girls leave for the cities to work in the growing textile mills of the Northeast? Describe their working conditions.
10. Why was writing such a good profession for women?
11. If work in factories was so hard, why were women and children the chief form of labor?
12. Write a short paragraph on the changing role of women in the professions and in business from 1607 to 1830. What brought about these changes?
13. The size of families in colonial America was more than five times greater than those of today. Discuss the pros and cons of such large families at that time.
14. Compare the roles of Indian and white women. Which group do you think was happier? What contributions did Indian women make to American society?

BOOKLET 1 1607-1830

Discussion or Essay (continued):

15. What two reform movements had their beginnings in the early 19th century?

16. What sort of rights were most women concerned with during the period from 1700 to 1830? Why were these rights more important to them than suffrage?

17. Explain why the colonial-revolutionary period was not one of intense social reform. What were the main concerns of men and women at that time?

Library Research

1. Working with encyclopedias, trace changes in children's education from 1607 to 1830.

2. Women participated in the American Revolutionary War to a certain extent. Find out about their activities in this respect.

3. What sort of transportation developed after the Revolutionary War? Write a short essay on this.

4. Learn more about the technology of the textile industry. How did new machinery affect labor?

5. Find out more about colonial American retail businesses and trades, and women's participation in them.

BOOKLET 1 1607-1830

Vocabulary

Page 3 dwindled
aspirations

Page 4 stamina
essential
callous
deteriorated
hardiest
assumption
subordinate
obliged

Page 5 access
ironic
excluded
critical
liberating
primarily
tutor
isolated

Page 6 inhabitants
numerous
carded
churned
surplus
beneficial

Page 7 millinery
upholsterers
apprenticeship
dispensing

Page 8 rigid
orthodoxy
defied
primarily
confines
temperance
abstinence
dominant
matrons

Page 9 tanning hides
migrations
nomadic
subsistence
legendary
interceding
onset
rallied
boycotted

Page 10 dynamic
acquired
turnpikes
accelerating

Page 11 migration
urbanization
metropolitan
indentured servants
rural
industrialization
lured
initially
predominant
textile

Page 12 provoked
milliner

Page 13 foment
emancipation
preparatory
secure
eccentric

Page 14 attorney
unobtrusive
exerted
confined
trend

BOOKLET 2 1830-1860

Discussion or Essay Questions

1. What were some of the major national trends during the period 1830-60? Discuss the changes these made in the everyday life of an American.

2. Why are technological advances in the home significant to the lives of women? Write a brief paragraph about this as it applies to this period.

3. Describe some of women's accomplishments as authors during this time.

4. Significant changes occurred in the field of education for women during the period 1830-60. What were these changes?

5. What happened to the cottage industries as businesses moved into the factories?

6. How did immigration affect the working class women?

7. The industrial revolution and subsequent large scale Irish immigration beginning in the 1840's is said by some to have been the most significant factor in the growth of the women's movement. Why do you think this might be true?

8. Trace women's participation in the professions during this period. Do you think Elizabeth Blackwell was typical?

9. What major social reforms occupied women during the 1830's and 40's? Were all classes of women concerned with these issues? Who were some of the women leaders?

10. It is said that each of the three major feminist movements was preceeded by a period of social reform. Was this true during the period 1830-60? Why did participation in reform movements ignite the women's movement?

11. The convention at Seneca Falls is considered to be the true beginning of the women's rights movement. What happened at Seneca Falls to make this true?

12. Criticism of the women's rights movement was strong during this period. Many believed the suffragists would destroy the family and home. How did this affect the movement?

13. Discuss the relationship between black and white women from the early 1800's to the Civil War. Why were most women so concerned with the plight of the slave?

BOOKLET 2 1830-1860

Discussion or Essay (continued):

14. Westward expansion, begun at the turn of the century, continued during the decades 1830-60. Describe the living conditions as you imagine them. How did the migrating women's lives differ from the lives of women in New England?

15. Life in the South was also different. How and why? How did black women fare?

16. Summarize the major issues of the day as the Civil War approached.

Library Research

1. Read some biographical data on the Grimké sisters and write a few short paragraphs about their unusual activities.

2. Write short biographies of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth. Describe the underground railroad and how it operated.

3. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan Brownell Anthony were the early leaders of the women's rights movement. Write an essay about their lives in relation to the movement.

4. Study the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions passed by the women at Seneca Falls in 1848. What rights were women asking for at that time?

5. Compare Lucy Stone's beliefs with the two women mentioned in question 3.

6. Who was Margaret Fuller? Why was she important to the feminist movement?

7. See if you can learn more about the conditions of women in industry at this time. What proportion of women were employed? What were their working conditions? Which industries employed them?

BOOKLET 2 1830-1860

Vocabulary

Page 3 conceived
marred
acrimonious
abolish
impoverished
abolition
conscious

Page 4 turnpikes
primarily
mechanization
immigrants
urban
unabated
influx
available

Page 5 commerce
enabled
instantaneous
transmission
impact
affluent
abundance
tentatively
probing
temperance
emerged
lucrative
proficient

Page 6 controversial
notable
livelihood
"cottage" industries
republic

Page 7 maintenance
barriers
asset
numerous
hurdle
ostrasized
barred
dispensaries
culmination
clinical
eminent
feminist
noted
astronomer
reknown

Page 8 ordained
inadequacy
sphere

Page 9 domestic science
formidable

Page 10 demolished
intolerable
deteriorated
immense
exploited

Page 11 prescribed
auspicious
compelling
recourse
abusive
squandered
usurpation
relegated
clinical
incensed

Page 12 penal
advocate
restricting
assemblage
rampant
convened
phase
habiliments
propounding
condemnation

BOOKLET 3 1860-90

Discussion or Essay Questions

1. Describe women's efforts in support of the Civil War. Name some of the more active women.

2. What affect did the Civil War have on women's professions?

3. The country was changing rapidly during the latter part of the 19th century. What were some of the major social and economic trends?

4. Describe some of the technological advancements. Why were large scale immigration and the determined effort of middle class women to have smaller families considered more important to change than all the home technology of the time?

5. Discuss the changes taking place in the field of education as it related to women. Why was education so important to women?

6. Compare the labor unions of this period with the labor unions of today. Do you think the mechanization of industry had a salutary effect on wage-earning women--and on working children?

7. Rapid economic expansion occurred after the Civil War. Did women's roles grow along with the growth of the country?

8. Trace the accomplishments of women in the professions during this period. Did they make much headway?

9. Who were the well-known women writers of this era? A few women reached national prominence in the political and public welfare field. Who were they?

10. How did the depression of 1873 affect women's associations and reform movements?

11. What were the primary differences between the National Women's Suffrage Association and the American Women's Suffrage Association? How did the 20-year schism of the women's rights associations affect the movement?

BOOKLET 3 1860-90

Library Research

1. Read more about the differences between NWSA and AWSA. Do you think those who are willing to make compromises in their demands are more apt to succeed than those who insist on a complete change?

2. Learn more about women's interests in the 14th and 15th amendments. How did feminists want to change the wording and for what reason?

3. Write a short biography on Frances Willard and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Why was temperance so much more popular as a reform movement than suffrage?

4. Mary Baker Eddy's influence was in some ways greater than any other woman's before her time or after. Look her up in an encyclopedia or other reference work; then write a short essay on her life.

5. A few Indian women became well known as spokeswomen for their people. Write short biographies about the La Flesche sisters and Sarah Winnemucca.

6. Read more about the women's club movement. Why was it so important to the expanding role of women in American society?

7. Learn more about the few women lawyers of this time. Write short biographies telling of the difficulties they encountered in entering this profession.

BOOKLET 3 1860-90

Vocabulary

Page 3	convalesced regenerate secession subsequent unstintingly
Page 4	supplement legendary reluctant
Page 5	hazardous mystical abolition paramount reconstruction staunch
Page 6	intricate standardized urbanization immigration
Page 7	commercially initially mechanical conveniences
Page 8	appropriate institution liberal clerical
Page 9	tenements proportion participation strove
Page 10	confront exclusionist barriers
Page 11	proficient regional reminisences rural
Page 12	coeducational internship dispensaries obstacles landmark prejudice
Page 13	similarly ostrasized theological intrepid vocation lucrative prominence notorious repaired
Page 14	prominent dynamic
Page 15	destitute instrumental allotting evangelism gospel
Page 16	temporary
Page 17	dedication jubilantly schism ultimately exceeding
Page 18	unifying restoring agrarian

BOOKLET 4 1890-1920

Discussion or Essay Questions

1. The National Women's Suffrage Association and the American Women's Suffrage Association joined forces to become NAWSA. Why did they do this? How did uniting affect their strength?

2. No longer demanding complete equality of the sexes, the feminists of this period narrowed their goals to one cause only--suffrage. What was the outcome of this and what can be learned from it?

3. Discuss the relationship between black and white women in the reform movements. Were they sympathetic to each other?

4. The Progressive Era is considered to be one of the great periods of American reform. What were the conditions that brought it about? Discuss the many reform movements of this period and the outstanding women leaders.

5. The General Federation of Women's Clubs grew from 500,000 in 1890 to 2,000,000 in 1910. What was the significance of the growth of this and other women's organizations during this time? Write a short paragraph about some of these associations, including those of ethnic minorities.

6. Contrast the first and second major reform periods (abolitionism and the Progressive Era) and the surge in the women's rights movements that followed each. How were they different? Who were the leaders?

7. Major socio-economic trends continued from the previous 30 years. Which of these were the most important?

8. How did the family unit change during these 30 years?

9. Of what importance to the people of this country was the rapid growth in the use of steel?

10. Give a brief description of some of the technological advances reached during this period--in the home--in the office--in industry--in travel.

11. Consider the effect these changes had on the majority of people. Were all people affected alike? Rich and poor? Educated--uneducated? Men and women?

12. Chinese and Japanese women began immigrating to this country during the middle of the 19th century. What problems did they face here?

BOOKLET 4 1890-1920

Discussion or Essay (continued):

13. Describe the political status of women between 1890-1920.

14. The vast majority of working women were not in the professions but worked instead as wage-earning women in factories, sales, service, clerical and domestic work. How did they fare during this 30 year period?

15. Who were some of the women involved with labor union activity? What did they do?

16. Two new organizations, the National Consumer's League and the National Women's Trade Union League, were formed which supported the wage-earning woman. What were they and how were they helpful?

17. Write a brief essay describing women in the professions during these 30 years. What progress were they making?

Library Research

1. Women and Economics, written by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, is even today considered by some to be the most important feminist statement ever written. See if you can find out what she had to say.

2. Discover more about the settlement house concept--what were the concerns of its leaders? Where did the idea originate? Write a short sketch of the life of Jane Addams.

3. Carrie Chapman Catt developed a "winning plan" for suffrage in 1915. Write an essay on this and Mrs. Catt's involvement in the suffrage movement. Anna Howard Shaw, the second great suffrage leader of this time, had an interesting background. Write a short sketch of her life.

4. Margaret Sanger dedicated her life to the dissemination of birth control information. Write an account of her life--her struggles--her accomplishments.

5. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was a dynamic labor leader. Write about her life and activities.

BOOKLET 4 1890-1920

Vocabulary

Page 3 urbanization
symbolic
utilizing
interchangeable

Page 4 corrugated
feasible
boundless
explosive
unrestrained
exploited
monopolies
corrupt
degradation

Page 5 dynamic
progressive
spontaneously
commercially
erosion
urban
pursuits

Page 6 liberal
adjust
influx
exclusion

Page 7 decade
resumed
partially
discriminatory
custody
deleted

Page 8 spinster
inclination
accelerated
unprecedented
association
civic

Page 9 pogroms
integrate
embarked
dedicated

Page 10 liberating
innovative
municipal
incentive
alleviating

Page 11 obscene

Page 12 adherents
enacted
conspicuous
affront
downtrodden
federal

Page 13 stenography
comparable
textile

Page 14 countered
hostility
sophisticated
subsequently

Page 15 restriction
convert

Page 16 anthropology
astronomy
gynecology
pediatrics

Page 17 abound
modes
explosive
volatile
flamboyant

Page 18 militant
tactics
vitality
momentum
vigil

Page 19 yeomen
emancipation

Page 20 crucial

BOOKLET 5 1920-60

Discussion or Essay Questions

1. It had taken 72 years to win the vote. Why was it so important to women? What implications are there in not being allowed to vote?

2. With suffrage achieved, women felt they had at last reached the goal they had been seeking. A number of other events encouraged women in the early 1920's. What were there? (New reform organizations--new government coalitions?)

3. Within a few years, in spite of early encouraging signs, feminism went into a decline. Mention a few of the setbacks.

4. What problems for women were there within the women's movement itself? What part did Alice Paul and the National Women's Party play?

5. The 1920's were very different from the years of the Progressive Era. Describe the new social climate.

6. The 1930's, 40's and 50's saw even more life-style reversals. Write a short paragraph about this.

7. What new technological advances changed the lives of Americans? How were women affected in particular?

8. The national trend toward urbanization continued but there was also another trend--suburban living. What was it and what brought it about?

9. The 1930's brought Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the presidency. How did he cope with the severe depression? What effect did New Deal measures have on working class women?

10. Of all the wars this country has been engaged in, World War II brought about the greatest change in women's employment. Describe some of these changes.

11. The 40-year period from 1920-60 showed a downward trend of women in professions. Discuss this and the possible reasons for it.

12. Women in the arts continued to flourish. Who were some of the star performers?

BOOKLET 5 1920-60

Discussion or Essay (continued):

13. Only a few women were successful in business during this time but, thanks to Eleanor Roosevelt, the field of politics opened up to women for a brief period. Describe some of the happenings.

14. The Civil Rights movement began in the 1950's. Describe the most important causes.

Library Research

1. Write a short biography of Alice Paul. Describe her activities in England and in this country.

2. What is the Equal Rights Amendment all about? What are its strengths and weaknesses? Why have some women opposed it?

3. Eleanor Roosevelt's achievements (as a person, not as a president's wife) are both fascinating and significant. Read some biographical material and write a short essay about her.

4. Find out more about Mary McLeod Bethune. Why is she so respected by all people, not just the people of her own race?

5. The position of women in the labor market probably changed more during this period than at any other previous time. See if you can find out more about:

    a. The New Deal measures and how they affected women

    b. World War II and women's expanding job opportunities

6. A few women reached the top in the professions, the arts, entertainment, and sports. Select a few names from your booklet and find out what you can about them.

BOOKLET 5 1920-60

Vocabulary

Page 2 concerted
culminated
solidarity
futility
initiated

Page 4 thriving
reoriented
coalitions
disseminate

Page 5 maternal
exemplified
impetus
spurred
portend

Page 6 franchise
disillusioning
primarily
previous
predecessor

Page 7 laboriously
endorsed
alleged
restrictive
dissipated

Page 8 populace
emancipation
incisively
depicted
temperate
extolled
mobility
obsession
synchronized
propriety
taboos
exuberant
plight

Page 9 siphoned
traditionalism
conceivable

Page 10 exacting
molder
portrayed
exclusionary
enacted
suburban
vogue

Page 11 mushroomed
calculator
computer
comprised

Page 12 resurgence
amalgamated
mediated

Page 13 onset
advent
unprecedented
arsenal
catapulted
influx
retrenchments

Page 14 lagged
prestigious
patronage
comprised
barriers

Page 15 ethnology
laymen
analysis
exclusively
prominence

Page 16 corporate
immersed

Page 17 competence

Page 18 reverted
amassing
mired
landmark
segregation

Page 19 dormant
resurgence

BOOKLET 6 1960's and 70's

Discussion or Essay Questions

1. What socio-economic factors of the 1960's and 70's particularly influenced women's roles?

2. In what ways do the ideas of today's women activists differ from those of the 19th century? How do these women see women's roles and spheres of activity?

3. Minority women, except for black women, have only recently taken an interest in their own feminist organizations. Why do you think this is so?

4. The third major reform era in the nation's history occurred in the 1960's and 70's. What were some of the issues?

5. In the 1960's several things happened which seemed to augur well for women. One was the establishment of a Commission on Women by President Kennedy. Another was the passage of three pieces of federal legislation relating to employment. Describe what these were about.

6. In the late 1960's a new feminist movement was triggered. What were the conditions that brought this about? In what ways was this similar to previous surges in the feminist movement?

7. Women interested in the feminism movement seemed to fall into two main groupings. What were they? Which would you be more sympathetic to?

8. Write a short essay on the women's organizations that were formed during this period and the functions they served.

9. The goals of feminist organizations have expanded in the 1970's to include new objectives. What are some of them?

10. What gains and what losses do women feel they have had in the 1970's?

11. The Houston conference found some delegates, such as Phyllis Shlafly, opposed to the feminist movement. Why did they feel this way? How do you feel?

12. What are some of the minority organizations in this country? How do you feel about the "melting pot" theory of assimilation versus the "cultural pluralism" theory?

BOOKLET 6 1960's and 70's

Discussion or Essay (continued):

13. Who are some of the feminist leaders of the minority groups? Are they more concerned, do you think, with the problems of being a member of a minority group, or of being a woman? How do you feel?

14. Forty percent or more of the labor force are now women. Where are the majority of them working? What new fields are opening up? Who is Dolores Huerta?

15. Write a paragraph or two on women in the military, business, and the professions during the last two decades. What is the profession of Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu?

16. What about women in politics? Are more women holding public office and at what level? How does the public react, do you think, to women in high political office?

17. Probably the greatest changes of the past two decades have been changes in life-style, family structure, and social life. What are some of these changes? How do you feel about them?

Library Research

1. From your news magazines, learn more about new issues and recent happenings of the feminist movement of today.

2. Discover more about Betty Friedan, her book, The Feminine Mystique, and her participation in political activities.

3. The Houston Conference of 1977 was considered by women to be a momentous occasion. Find out more about the resolutions that were passed. Do you think some gains were made?

4. What are the claims of those at the Houston Conference who are opposed to most of the feminist demands, including the ERA?

5. What is meant by the statement, "Cultural patterns tend to stereotype jobs."? Find out what you can about this and write a short essay on it.

BOOKLET 6 1960's and 70's

Vocabulary

Page 3	global insurmountable focused oppressed
Page 4	cessation ethnic
Page 5	federal optimism trigger rash
Page 6	ignited comprised focus
Page 7	media
Page 8	equity eligibility mortgaging extended exerted mandates non-compliance
Page 9	ratification abridged convened appropriation compiled coalition
Page 10	presiding priorities
Page 11	cede attributable
Page 12	diverse cultural pluralism
Page 13	surpass exceeded
Page 14	impels inflation differential
Page 15	enticing interstate
Page 16	aspire encounter
Page 17	practitioners waning
Page 18	access conjunction negligible
Page 19	illusory impoverished vocation envisioned
Page 20	prevalent denigrates depicts offensive inflated anticipate

GENERAL

Discussion or Essay Questions

1. Many diverse demands have been made by women from colonial times to the present. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, for instance, felt that economic equality was the paramount issue, although most of her life was spent achieving suffrage. How do you feel about this?

2. We have mentioned certain social and economic trends which have occurred during the history of this country. In what way would the following trends affect society as a whole and women in particular?

   a. population increase
   b. urbanization
   c. industrialization
   d. immigration
   e. depression and economic expansion

3. Why was the development of transportation important to the development of the country?

4. Technological advancements are important in affecting women's roles. Discuss some of the more important of these advancements and the impact they have had on women.

5. Which major national events have made the greatest changes in women's lives? How? (Discuss women in World War I and World War II and the differences.)

6. Many of the women mentioned in this study were concerned with social issues other than the political rights of their own sex. What were some of these issues? Discuss, for instance, the interests of C. Beecher, M. Sanger, F. Willard, E. Blackwell, M. Lyon, S. La Follette, and M. McL. Bethune. Name some others.

7. Describe the feminist movement amongst the women who belong to minority groups. What problems do they face?

8. In his book, American Women, Chafe writes that "--sex inequality is rooted within the social structure itself through the allocation of different spheres of responsibility to men and women. The division of labor, in most areas, has led to a division of authority as well." Write a short essay in response to this.

9. Chafe: "Breadwinning and homemaking are the activities most closely identified with popular images of male and female." Do you think this distribution of roles has altered over time? How?

GENERAL

Discussion or Essay (continued):

10. White middle-class women have been in the forefront of most of the major social reform movements, including the women's rights movement. Why do you think this is so? Who are the beneficiaries of reform?

11. Most Americans think that the family, not the individual, constitutes the basic unit of society. What implications does this have for the feminist viewpoint? Who is the head of the family? Can it be shared?

Summary Projects

1. Select one of the following spheres of activity and trace women's role in that sphere from 1607 to the present:

    a. the domestic sphere
    b. legal rights
    c. education
    d. professions (including the arts and sports)
    e. business
    f. women as wage earners and in the labor movement
    g. reform movements
    h. women's rights movement
    i. politics and public welfare

2. Outline the major reform periods in American history, the causes, and the particular concerns of the time.

3. Trace the major surges and declines in the women's rights movements from the 1830's to the present. Who were some of the leaders?

4. What do you think have been the most important reasons for women's changing roles in America--her life style--her spheres of activity? What do you see for the future?

5. The history of feminism has been divided into very specific periods, one quite different from another. Using some of the general history books on American women, follow these periods and write a paper pointing out the differences between them in intent, scope, and type of concerns.

GENERAL

Library Research

1. Women in England and in America struggled for their rights and a new role in society. Using books in your library (including reference encyclopedias), write a brief essay about the English feminist movement. Who were the early leaders? How did the movement differ from that in America? Show that Alice Paul was an example of this difference.

2. Find out more about the development of transportation in this country. How did this development, along with increased industrialization, affect the lives of men and women?

3. Learn more about the shift from rural to urban to suburban living. What caused these shifts? How have these changes affected society and women in particular?

4. Throughout the history of this country some men have supported women in the feminist movement. See if you can discover more about these men and who they were.

5. Select one of the following women and write a short biography about her. Point out her contribution to women and to American history:

   Margaret Fuller
   Florence Kelley
   Frances Wright
   Charlotte Perkin Gilman
   Carrie Chapman Catt

6. Simone de Beauvoir and Mary Wollstonecraft were not American women but had an influence on the American feminist movement. See if you can find out why.

7. Using the material in these booklets as well as other reference material, write a short history of outstanding black women, including their organizations and goals. Point out the changing relationship with white women.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Presented as an adjunct to the educational study unit, American Women: 1607 to the Present, prepared by Polly and John Zane and published by the Proof Press, Post Office Box 1256, Berkeley, CA 94720.

This bibliography has been compiled to give the interested student and teacher additional sources of information relating to the history of women in America. It is in no way intended to be complete or definitive; the student should seek other materials in his or her own library including library reference materials, encyclopedias, historical dictionaries, etc.

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